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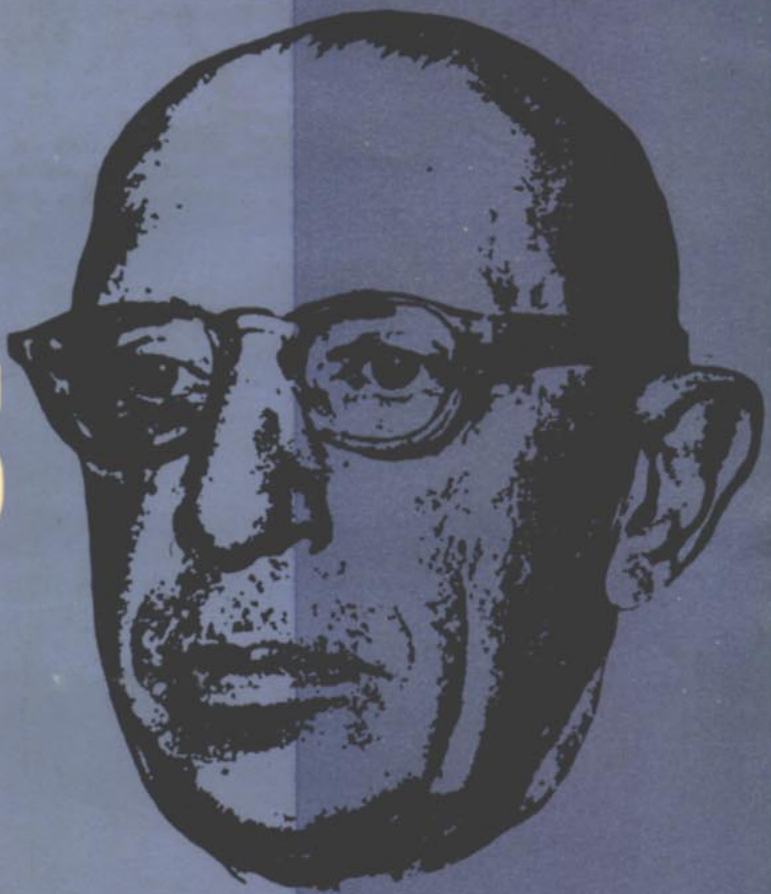
STRAV-INSKY'S RETURN



ROBERT CRAFT

HERBERT LUETHY
Culture & the Cold War

ALASTAIR BUCHAN **Insecurity**

BERNARD CRICK **Oakeshott**

RAY GOSLING **Little Man**

PETER WILES **Convergence**

MICHEL BUTOR **Novelists**

ALASTAIR REID **Foreigners**

ALFRED SHERMAN **Satirists**

NADINE GORDIMER **Censors**

Edited by
STEPHEN SPENDER
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Encounter

Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

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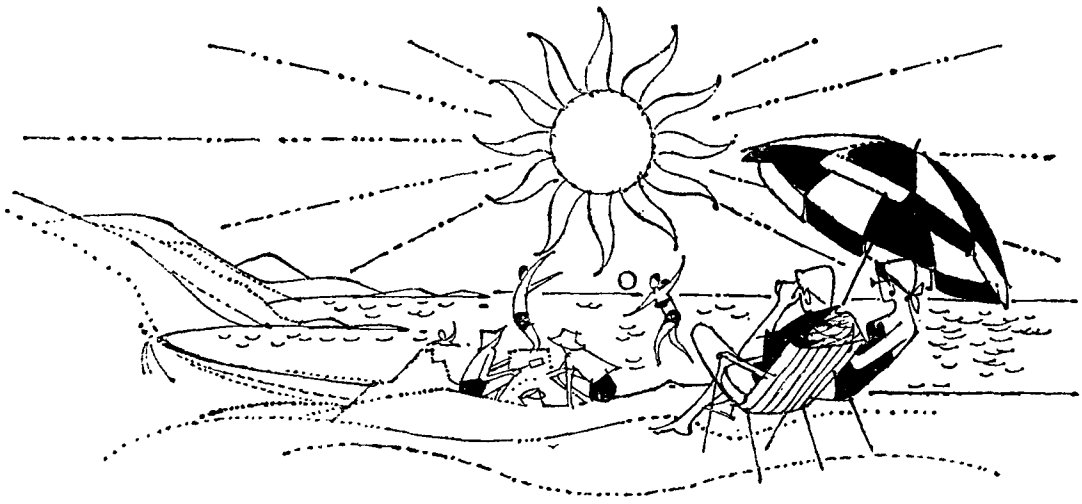

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Alastair Buchan

The Age of Insecurity

Some Interim Conclusions

WHAT DO WE MEAN by the overworked phrase "international security"? It is not the same thing as perfect and perpetual peace. I am not at all sure that the word "peace" has any meaning in the relations of sovereign states which, by their very nature, are competitive, ambitious, quarrelsome, the catalysts of the kinds of friction and tension which are part of man's inheritance. Peace is a personal state of mind—rarely achieved and not consistently pursued—rather than an attribute of political society, as one can see by the briefest glance at the internal political life of any but the most torpid nations.

Nor can we mean by "international security" the permanent banishment of all violence between organised groups from the surface of the earth. There has never been a time in recorded history when such a state persisted—though some think it may have in pre-history—and there is no reason to think that, as the world becomes more crowded, we shall prove more fortunate than our ancestors. Primitive but murderous wars between states could take place in a nominally disarmed world, and we deceive ourselves if we imagine that the dismantling of modern major armaments is going to lead to some millennial state, in which the sound of gunfire is never heard except on the Queen's Birthday or the 12th of August.

International security is not perpetual peace or the banishment of war. It is something we have had, over our historical past, for more years than we have lost it. It is something which we enjoy at present, though its foundations are too precarious for our liking. It is, surely, a state of affairs in which the inhibitions and disincentives to making war are stronger than the incentives, and operate with equal force on all important parties to any of the manifold disputes which conflicting ambitions and ideologies create between nation states. More than that, it is a state of affairs in which the alternatives to a forceful solution of any conflict are as numerous, as sparing of national pride, as readily available, as human wit can devise, whether they be political, diplomatic, or judicial.

This is not an original definition, nor is this a novel state of affairs. But its requirements have become more specific and more stringent as this century has progressed. In the first place, the bloodshed and dislocation produced by the two World Wars have made it impossible for us to reconcile ourselves to a continuation of the historical pattern which suggested that the Great Powers, or some of them, came to blows on an average of three times a century. Even if the nuclear weapon had never been invented, the experience of the first half of this century would have profoundly altered our attitude to conflict between Great Powers.

BUT THE INTRODUCTION of the nuclear weapon has had a second and even more far-reaching effect: namely, to abolish any valid distinction between national and international security—at least in our hemisphere. There is now no question of any party—whether it be one of the great nuclear powers itself or one of its lesser allies—escaping without terrible consequences from a nuclear exchange. The collapse of any concept of victory in great power war has stimulated our interest in the security of our adversaries as well as in our own. Either we dispense with strategic war or we all suffer damage which

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is beyond the imagination even of the most febrile to comprehend.

Moreover, the development of intercontinental means of delivery means that there is no escape through political action from this physical fact. Britain might withdraw from her alliances and quadruple her navy, but she would still remain one of the most vulnerable countries in the world. The United States might scrap all her overseas commitments, bring her forces home, and withdraw into a Fortress America policy, but she would be no less physically vulnerable than she is to-day. Russia might abandon the Revolution for a comfortable bourgeois life and abandon all the eighty-one Communist parties to their fate, but her civilisation could still be destroyed in half an hour. In this sense we are all "open societies" to-day and no one has expressed this better than Mr. Khrushchev, though the actions of his government sometimes make one wonder if the lesson has sunk home.

> In some ways [he said two years ago in Austria] we on this planet are like the inhabitants of Noah's Ark.... If, on this earth, we are not able to live as the beasts were able to live in Noah's Ark, and if we start a war to settle disputes between States—some dislike Socialism, some dislike Capitalism—we shall destroy our Noah's Ark, the earth.

As a corollary of this, it can no longer be taken for granted that our defensive deterrent strength and our security are to be equated. Unilateral attempts to improve the security of individual nations can lead to a decrease in the security of all. Since no valid distinction has ever been accepted between offensive and defensive planning, and the distinction is wholly obscured by a deterrent strategy, attempts to make clear to one's adversary—through the static and din of ideological conflict—that one is engaged purely in "defensive" preparations, are rarely successful. Thus, Stalin seriously compromised Soviet security by the measures he took to protect Russia's western flank after the Second World War, turning the east European countries into satellites and stationing an enormous army in Europe. He exposed his country to the very grave risk of an American preventive war in the early 1950s. Similarly, the United States and Britain compromised their own security in the mid-1950s by the attempt to evolve a version of the containment doctrine that was based on the threat of massive retaliation with long-range bombers against any form of incursion, thus spurring the Soviet Union to make maximum diplomatic use of its lead in rocket research. Russia has, at this moment, only escaped by a narrow margin a very serious compromise of her own safety by the attempt to offset what is now a large American lead in missiles, through emplacing some of her own upon the territory of a Caribbean satellite. And very possibly the view that she felt impelled to try and augment her defensive strength, because the Americans have, in their turn, developed a large quantitative lead in missiles, is correct.

Of Time, Balance, Power

THE INCREASINGLY stringent requirements of international security lead, it seems to me, toward certain special requirements for any policies that seek to strengthen and maintain it indefinitely, in a world that consists, and will consist for some time yet, of sovereign states with conflicting ideologies and ambitions.

The first is that some greater clarity must be given to the concept of the *"balance of power"* in its military aspect, and particularly as it affects the nuclear powers. What is a balance of nuclear power, and how is it related to other forms of power, non-nuclear military power, or political and economic power? Is our security at all related to the level and quantity of armaments, and if so, does the notion of a "minimum deterrent" in the hands of the two superpowers withstand our scrutiny? Is it conceivable that two powers as differently situated as the Soviet Union in the heart of its Eurasian land mass, and the United States at the heart of a maritime coalition, could ever agree on what this minimum was? Yet if the idea is not negotiable, have we any alternative to an increasingly dangerous arms race but an agreed system of general and comprehensive disarmament with all its technical complexities and political improbabilities?

The second is a better understanding of the *limitations of military power*. I am not one of those optimists who believes that the importance of military power is diminishing with the spread of communications, the rise of a more vocal world opinion or its more effective expression in the U.N. Assembly. But there is now no doubt that the world reacts faster to threats to its own security than it has ever done in the past. And a good case can be made for the view that major crises of our time, Indo-China, Suez, Berlin, or Cuba—those moments when international security seemed about to collapse—have

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all been the result of a bad misjudgment by someone of the efficacy of military action or threats.

A third requirement is often neglected. It is the regaining of a greater *margin of time* in moments of high tension: time for second thoughts, time to learn exactly what is taking place, time for negotiation, time for aroused passions to cool, time to forget. Time in this context is something which technical progress has been steadily eroding for a century: from the days when the foot soldier could be rushed to the battlefield in a train, to the situation of to-day when the missiles rest hissing on their pads, the bomber squadrons stand ready at the end of the runway and the two great radar systems of the opposed camps girdle the whole of the Northern Hemisphere. With luck we shall learn from experience—or may never have to learn—that many of the theoretical dangers which this instant confrontation raises—surprise or pre-emptive attack, rapid escalation from one level of conflict to a higher—are only theoretical. The politicians are still in charge, not the theorists. But it may well be that the safe outcome of the direct confrontation of the two super powers, in the Caribbean last October, was related to the fact that it took place in that still blessedly sluggish element, the sea. On the ground and in the air, both sides unfortunately can now fall upon each other with the speed and fury of Miltonic angels.

Technology has steadily robbed states of that element of time and warning which they took for granted when military force moved only at marching pace. And it is therefore necessary to re-create it by artificial means if those channels of settlement that are alternatives to war, diplomatic or judicial, are to have any real value as a foundation of international security. No one, I think, in our generation saw this more clearly than Dag Hammarskjöld: though he was powerless to intervene between the great powers, one of his greatest memorials is the number of lesser wars he prevented by interposing that essential element of time, observation, and warning between adversaries.

OBVIOUSLY THIS IS not an exhaustive list of the requirements of a better system for the preservation of international security. But taking it as it stands for the moment, it is worth asking why it is that we have made so little headway towards achieving even these modest objectives, even though we have surmised for half a century, and known with certainty for a decade, that any collapse of the system would jeopardise not merely our interests, but our lives and civilisation.

I do not think that any such simple answer as "the Cold War" accounts for our failure. It is true that the Russians have only begun to admit quite recently in public that war would be as disastrous for them as for us, but they have known it for much longer. It is true that many people in the West, especially in the United States, have until recently looked upon the Cold War as something that could be won as it was possible to win earlier hot wars. It is true that the world as a whole has only realised recently how dangerous is its predicament. But the first disarmament conference was convened sixty-five years ago, and ever since 1919 the statesmen of the world have been consciously trying to build safeguards against war. Why does the goal still elude us, despite the urgency of our need?

I am always afraid of over-simplification, but I would suggest that our difficulty arises from the fact that we are living at the heart of three simultaneous and intersecting revolutions, which, as far as international security is concerned, have a continuous bearing upon each other.

One is a scientific revolution which is expanding man's mastery of his environment with greater speed in every decade: the evidence of this confronts us every week.

The second is a new industrial revolution which has vastly increased the wealth and productivity of those nations which are already industrialised: the two feed back upon each other with a double effect as far as international security is concerned. The first has been to liberate a level of resources for peacetime military preparation which governments could never have contemplated in an earlier age. Leaving aside nuclear weapons for a moment, consider the fact that there are 16 million men under arms in the Soviet and American alliances, or a quarter of those mobilised at the height of the two World Wars. The second effect has been to transform those responsible for national security, the soldiers and sailors, from being the most traditional element in any national society —hanging on to their horses, or their sailing ships, for as long as possible—into the boldest innovators. The consequence has been to accelerate the tempo of change in the nature of weapons and warfare to a speed which makes it

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difficult even for the innovators themselves to perceive the effect of their actions.

THE THIRD REVOLUTION is the political one, the change in the whole structure of world politics that is implicit in the end of colonialism and the quantum jump in the number of sovereign states, that has, for instance, doubled the membership of the United Nations in ten years. I would not for a moment argue that this process could have been arrested or delayed, but its effect has been to create a fragmentation of power—illustrated by the fact that there are now some five thousand people bearing the title of *"Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary"*—at the very moment when the forces of technical and economic change require a stable political order if they are not to breed envy and hatred between nations. The triumph of the sovereign state has come at a moment when we can least afford it. In the fullness of time this anarchy may be mitigated by the rise of regional systems of power and security in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, as well as Europe, but time is something we are short of.

If it were not for the pace of scientific and technical advance, the armed confrontation of the two hostile power systems might not have assumed such alarming proportions. If it were not for the increasing dominance of the largest centres of industrial production, we might be able to look forward to a world in which political and military power was more healthily diffused among a number of large and medium-sized nations, instead of having to reconcile ourselves to the dominance of the two largest. If nationalism were not the potent force it is, the Western task of containing Soviet and Chinese ambitions might have been confined to certain limited geographic areas.

The consequence of these overlapping revolutions has been what I can only describe as the "acceleration of history," where changes that in earlier times might have been spread out over a century now occur every few years. This has its beneficial aspects—the speed, for instance, with which the Marshall Plan regenerated Western Europe—but by and large it means that man, with his limited intellectual equipment, is asked to assimilate a pace of change which is quite outside his experience. The anachronisms to which this situation gives rise, the application of the ideas inherited even from the recent past —whether they be about the principles of Marxism, or the American way of life, or the grandeur of France—to the problems of to-day and to-morrow are now an endemic source of international insecurity.

WE KNOW how rapid is the pace of innovation in every aspect of our material life, in communications, transport, building, even in education. But nowhere has it been more hectic than in the military sciences.

To illustrate this with a personal experience: twenty-three years ago, in 1939, I spent several weeks as a new subaltern in a Canadian cavalry regiment learning sabre drill, an art that differed in no material particular from that employed at Minden or at Waterloo: less than six years later that same war ended with the explosion of two atom bombs. And since then the pace of change has become even more hectic, by reason of the fact that the industrial powers now spend £4,000 and £5,000 million a year on military research and development alone, about 100 times as much in real terms as they were spending before 1939, and probably over four times what they were spending on it at the height of the Second World War. And the logic of an intense, political conflict has made what is possible appear necessary.[1]

The consequence is that the attempt to create a stable military balance between the great powers by orthodox means has eluded us, and must, I think, continue to elude us. We can see this if we take a rapid backward glance at the years since Hiroshima. In the first, or atomic, phase which lasted roughly from 1946 to 1953, the Western powers, hasty in demobilising after VE Day, sought to offset the dominance of the Soviet army in Europe and Asia by air power reinforced by the existence of atomic bombs. This was not the kind of deterrent strategy we know to-day, resting on the explicit and immediate resort to nuclear weapons in the event of attack, but rather on an extension of the strategy of the Second World War into a period of troubled peace, assuming that full-scale war would still mean great land battles, but using the small American nuclear stockpile, and its

[1] In what follows I part company with Raymond Aron who argues in *On War* (London, 1958) that "States will succeed in outlawing modern weapons only when they exclude the hypotheses of a big war, and not *vice versa*." They have excluded central war, as a *rational act of policy*, for perhaps a decade without this decision having any bearing upon the arms race.

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monopoly in American hands, to create a strong disincentive to war.

It was not wholly successful in that it failed to prevent a breakdown of international security in the Far East, but it might not have become outmoded so rapidly had not the Western powers gravely underestimated the technical resourcefulness of the Soviet Union. The first Soviet atom bomb was exploded four years after the American, and, in another four years, both powers mastered the secret of thermonuclear fusion almost simultaneously. The momentous decision was taken in Washington in 1953—at the suggestion, it should be remembered, of the British Government—that Western air power should be greatly expanded, that conventional forces should be reduced, and that international security should be grounded on an explicit threat of strategic action by thermonuclear weapons, a hundred times more powerful than atomic bombs, against the heartlands of the two major Communist powers in response to any aggression anywhere. There were certain transitional factors in this decision to try and impose a Western *Pax Atomica* on the world, most particularly the sense of frustration engendered by the casualties and deadlock of the Korea war, a sense of despair that the West was faced by limitless hordes of Communists in both Europe and Asia who could only be held in check by exploiting Western technical resources to the full, a sense of alarm on the part of politically conservative administrations in the West at the enormous costs involved in any alternative policy. And it contained one central flaw, which had nothing to do with technical innovation: the tremendous moral implications of overtly threatening the first use of strategic nuclear weapons for a group of democratic countries that rested their opposition to the Communist bloc on moral principle. Only a few months after Mr. Dulles had publicly formulated the idea of "massive retaliation" in January, 1954, the crisis of the Indo-China war made it clear that the United States and her immediate allies were as much inhibited by their own moral heritage as from any fear of reprisal from implementing such a strategy.

But as a matter of *realpolitik*, the fatal element in the doctrine of massive retaliation was its assumption of a continued Western technological superiority over the Soviet Union. How this assumption, which was immensely costly both materially and politically, could ever have been made, still baffles me. It comes, I think, from this difficulty of keeping our conceptions abreast of the facts in a revolutionary age; in this case the difficulty of disabusing the Western mind of a belief, inherited from the Industrial Revolution, that technical innovation was an innate prerogative of the Anglo-Saxon and West European peoples.

The over-confident view of Western technical superiority had a corollary, namely that international security could be maintained primarily by *strategic* means—that it was not only impossible to maintain an adequate balance at the level of conventional land, sea, and air power, but that the necessity to do so had been diminished. Thus, during the crucial years after Stalin's death, when Soviet strategy was being extensively re-argued in Moscow to take account of the existence of nuclear weapons, Western strategy appeared to be becoming increasingly aggressive at the strategic level, while becoming increasingly weak in the kinds of forces which could deter marginal threats. It is not really very surprising that Soviet policy was made complementary to this Western attitude, very cautious in challenging any major Western interest, while not neglecting opportunities as they arose of eroding or capturing Western positions that were not worth the risk of nuclear war to defend —subversion in South-East Asia or the Caribbean; military friendship with dissatisfied powers like Indonesia and Egypt; bonhomie, loans and tractors for the emerging countries of Africa. I cannot see anything that smacks of a master plan for world domination in the Soviet decision to choose subtler instruments than the West: it seems to me to have been merely the natural reaction of an ambitious power with a highly developed theory of political action.

There were many people in the West who, in the mid-1950s, were troubled by the increasing reliance of Western policy on weapons of mass destruction, and the rigidity it seemed to impose on Western diplomacy. Unfortunately, the attempt to modify this policy was bedevilled by two further major innovations.

The first was the American development, by about 1954, of the so-called tactical atomic weapon, a charge with the destructive power of the Hiroshima bomb condensed into a small compass so that it could be fired, from an artillery shell or a small missile, against military targets. For a short space it looked as if technology had once again come to the rescue of the

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"Western way of life" by providing the firepower that would enable a small army to dominate a greater one, and around those weapons an attempt was made to develop a doctrine of limited nuclear war. The failure of this attempt—the failure to evolve distinctions as between targets or ranges or objectives which could still be visible in the fog of battle—is now generally acknowledged. But much precious time has been lost in this debate, and in the meantime, of course, the Soviet forces in Central Europe have been as extensively equipped with tactical nuclear weapons as our own. One more Western attempt to enhance our defensive posture by technical means has ended in a very real decline in the general security of the area where they are most extensively deployed, namely Europe.

At the strategic level the Soviet Union had started to develop a long-range air force by about 1954. But, for geographical reasons and because the United States had by then developed so extensive a network of domestic and overseas bases, it would have been impossible for the Soviet Union to cripple American retaliatory power. By the same token the United States had by then lost the ability to attack the Soviet Union without exposing her European allies, and perhaps her own people as well, to enormous damage. If that greatly overworked phrase "the nuclear stalemate" ever had any true meaning, it was during the short period when the East-West strategic balance of power rested on the manned bomber alone.

Then came the development of the long-distance missile as a dependable weapon of war to upset this whole calculation. The first reaction in the West turned out to be the wrong one. It was widely assumed that, since the Soviet Union was much further advanced in these weapons than the United States, they could build up a significant quantitative lead in the years immediately ahead. If one looks back at the American papers of four years ago one finds estimates that by early 1963 the Soviet Union could possess some 500 intercontinental missiles, while the United States would possess a bare 70. To his credit President Eisenhower refused to be stampeded by this arithmetic. But there is no doubt that the last years of his Administration—when many non-military factors were making for better communication with the Soviet Union—were clouded by a strong fear that the strategic balance might be about to tilt disastrously against the West. The Soviet knowledge of this fear imparted an unwise braggadocio to Soviet policy statements which they have only recently begun to lose.

IN FACT, THE EXACT REVERSE has occurred. The United States was alarmed, whether rightly or wrongly, into undertaking rapid programmes of missile construction so that she will, by late 1963, have about 500 ICBMs in position, which, she has decided to make clear, would be used first against military targets and secondly against cities. The Soviet Union, beset by competing demands on her smaller economic and scientific potential, has so far produced only some 75 ICBMs, though she has built up a very formidable missile threat to Europe and Japan. Instead she has sought to offset her numerical inferiority in ICBMs by developing weapons of a very high exposive power as an explicit threat to the great cities of the United States.

The Anatomy of Instability

CAN THERE be such a thing as a stable balance between the great powers in the nuclear missile age? There are three considerations which suggest, to me at least, that the idea that the nuclear weapon, by its own nature, creates some inherent stability in great power relations, may be a fallacy.

1. The nuclear missile is fundamentally destructive of international confidence. There is an argument among strategic analysts as to whether it does or does not create an incentive to be the side that strikes first, which I shall not enter here.[2] The point is that governments on both sides are deeply apprehensive that this is the case, and may tend to react accordingly in a crisis, thus making the crisis worse. For the missile is totally destructive of that element which we so badly need in a crisis—time. Time limits have become far too compressed by aircraft which can fly at speeds of 1,600 miles per hour or more: the ICBM flies at ten times that speed. More than that, as the missile becomes more dependable so it becomes harder to detect, as can be done with aircraft, whether an adver-

[2] Professor P. M. S. Blackett and I argued this out before the jury of ENCOUNTER readers in "Critique of Some Contemporary Defence Thinking" (April 1961) and "P. M. S. Blackett and War" (August 1961). Blackett felt that the American preoccupation with surprise attack was misplaced and neurotic. I argued that the danger was inherent in the weapons and that the Americans were right to take it seriously.

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sary is making warlike preparations. It thus tends to eliminate the element of strategic as well as tactical warning. Unless the great powers have prepared themselves, both physically and psychologically—something which is very hard to do—not to react until they are actually attacked with nuclear weapons, the dangers of "pre-emptive war"—of deciding to attack because one is convinced that one is about to be attacked, and war's oldest cause—are heightened by the missile. It is worth pointing out that Sir Winston Churchill made his famous pronouncement about peace being "the sturdy child of terror" before the introduction of the missile.

2. In the second place, further technological innovation might be destructive of such stability as has been introduced into the missile balance. Both sides have been fully aware of how delicate this diminution of the time element has made the balance of terror, and have sought to protect themselves against the danger of being faced with the alternatives of a knock-out blow or pre-emption, according to the nature of their own political societies. The Russians have hoped, by a cloak of political secrecy, to hide the location of their retaliatory bases. The open societies have used elaborate technical devices, the land missile in an underground silo, the Polaris submarine, the airborne alert systems. But Western advances in reconnaissance satellites may destroy the advantages of Soviet political secrecy unless they have already started to take precautions. Soviet advances in missile accuracy, weight of missile warheads, and high nuclear airbursts which can disrupt early warning systems, may jeopardise the value of many Western measures to make retaliatory systems more secure and therefore less alarm-proof in a crisis. Even the Polaris submarine might not survive some revolutionary advance in anti-submarine techniques. Somewhere in the late 1960s lurks the spectre of space weapons. And with the two blocs together spending on military research alone nearly as much as the entire revenue of the British Government, there is now a narrow gap between the conceivable and the feasible.

3. The third threat to stability in the relations of the major powers is of a somewhat different kind. One is tempted to state it in some broad generalisation such as that "weapons have taken over from the politicians," were this not grossly to oversimply the problem. It arises from a combination of the very long gestation period involved in highly complex modern weapons, anything up to six or eight years, with the faulty communication of motives and intentions that is inevitable in an ideological conflict such as the Cold War. What this means is that weapons are conceived in one political environment yet may be born in a quite different one, and that their birth may create the very conditions they were originally designed to offset.

Let me illustrate what I mean. The American decision to build a network of overseas air bases was the result of the 1949 Berlin crisis, of Korea, and of Stalin's ruthless European policies. By the time they were completed some six years later, a new régime was in power in Moscow with a different foreign policy, to whom it seemed inconsistent with American protestations that she was anxious to reach settlements on Europe and the Far East, that she should be drawing a tight noose around the Soviet heartland. The Soviet leaders thereupon decide to extract the maximum blackmail value from their new-found prowess in missiles, to the quite justifiable alarm of the United States, which was behind in missiles and had taken no defensive precautions against them. Energetic action was ordered, public money was pumped in by the billion, several years of taut nerves ensued, and it becomes apparent that it is the United States which is in fact developing a quantitative superiority in units of strategic striking power—ground, sea, and air-launched missiles—that might be of the order of 4 to 1 by 1965. In these circumstances it would not be altogether surprising if the Soviet Union decided to embark on some emergency programme, whether in more or still bigger warheads, to redress the balance—and this at a time when President Kennedy and Mr. Khrushchev are clearly anxious to reach certain accommodations with each other.

IT IS FASHIONABLE to ascribe this kind of mistake to the machinations of a "military-industrial complex" or lobby. There is no doubt that such a complex of interest in arms production does exist, not only in the United States but in this country, in Europe and even in the Soviet Union. It is merely another way of saying that, at a time when the world is spending about £120 million a day on armaments and armed forces, a great many people's livelihoods are involved. The real problem is that to keep a complex strategic balance in trim with political intentions and developments would require, not only far better political intelligence about the other man's real motives and intentions than either side possesses, but an ability to halt or

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scrap programmes in which vast public resources have been invested, and to manipulate huge industrial programmes with the refinement of a concert pianist. This cannot be done in democratic—or even in totalitarian—countries.

Finally, there is a different kind of threat to stability inherent in the hypnosis of the major powers with their relations with each other. It is true that this induces a useful caution in them, but this complex deadlock also lessens their ability to take concurrent, if not co-ordinated, action to deal with threats to the peace which may occur outside the immediate radius of their own power. The inability of the Soviet Union and the Western powers to influence the course of the Sino-Indian dispute is a case in point.

I HAVE TRIED to suggest certain reasons why I think that it is very hard to believe that we can reconcile ourselves to any projection of the trends of the last fifteen years into the next fifteen or twenty years. But before turning to the work of political construction that lies ahead of us, it is worth drawing attention to certain dangers which have come to be accepted as real, yet which I believe to be either chimerical or distorted.

There is the widespread belief that, because the number of nuclear powers increased from zero to four in fifteen years, it must inevitably increase from four to ten or twenty in the next fifteen. I can see no evidence to support this view and a great deal to dispute it, as the means of delivery, testing, and protecting a nuclear deterrent becomes more complex and expensive, and as the anxiety of the super-powers to prevent the spread hardens with every passing month. China, it is true, is determined to become a nuclear power of sorts, and India is in the process of acquiring an option to become one. But there is no certainty that India will exercise this option, and there are powerful reasons why she should not. In the other countries where the issue is being debated, Canada, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, and Israel, the negative arguments are losing none of their force.[3] We may have to try and reconstruct international security on the basis of five nuclear powers: I can see no reason to assume that we shall have to do so on the basis of ten or fifteen.

I believe that it will be principally the Soviet-American balance of power which will concern us for at least a decade or longer. China, with her old-fashioned view of world conflict, her outdated form of Marxism, and her vast numbers, will be a menace to the security of her immediate neighbours: she could not, in my view, be a modern great military power, in the American or Soviet sense, for a generation. The new Europe could attempt to become a nuclear super-power, but I do not think it likely. This continuing dominance of the present nuclear powers, now cautious and experienced, does not solve our problems, but it may prevent them from becoming insoluble.

I THINK WE DO no service to the cause of humanity if we indulge in masochistic fantasies about mad colonels pressing the button or flocks of geese being mistaken for bombers on the radar screen. "Strategy," as Clausewitz said a hundred years ago, "has become mere prudence." The nuclear powers have taken vast pains, as one can judge from a study of their arrangements, to eliminate mechanical dangers or uncontrolled responses, for it is they after all who would suffer the greatest damage from a nuclear war. The profoundly unscientific judgment of a man like C. P. Snow, that "Within at the most ten years, some of these bombs are going off. . . . That is the certainty," merely numbs the fertile brain of political man from considering the alternative means by which we might deepen the present shallow foundation of the world's safety.

(A second and concluding article will be published next month.)

[3] The most scholarly examination of these debates is in *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons*, by Leonard Beaton and John Maddox (Chatto & Windus, 21s.).

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Herbert Luethy

Culture and the Cold War

The Prospects of East-West Exchanges

INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS grow less and less reducible to the basic antagonism between the communist world and the West. That antagonism no longer has the simplicity of a head-on collision between two coherent blocs that it seemed to have at the time of the Marshall Plan and the Cominform. We know that the Western world is not united, and even the communist world cannot wholly escape the tendency to dispersion, to diversification and the autonomy of its parts. There is now a communism of the Extreme West called Poland, a communism of the Extreme East called China, not to mention the heresies and the outposts of equivocal obedience such as Belgrade, Tirana, and Havana. There are now problems of political, economic, ideological, and cultural relations between different communist countries, which do not all live by Moscow time, and therefore cannot exactly synchronize their own relations with the *tiers monde*, with neutral states or the West. Which means that the subject is no longer single but multiple and that it is important to abandon all simplified black-and-white maps of the world.

To talk of an evolution of the communist world is to have admitted already that it changes and grows different. The remark may seem obvious, but until recently it was far from self-evident either to anti-communists or to orthodox communists, both of whom affirmed, in different accents, that the communist bloc (or "camp") was immutable and monolithic. To-day both parties admit what has become too conspicuous to be denied.

No longer can we entertain the Orwellian vision of an intrinsically and completely communist world of concentration camps, robots, purges, and confessions. That world, in which thought was replaced by Pavlovian reactions, by strident howls of mechanised optimism and enthusiasm which sent shivers down one's spine, the world that so many intelligent analysts diagnosed as a paranoiac dream, was almost a reality ten or fifteen years ago. Now and until further notice, *1984* belongs to the past.

Not only is the communist world on the move, it is in a profound crisis; a crisis of government, of structure, and indeed of con-

CONFUSED *and contradictory are the mildest words for the state of East-West cultural exchange. The New York Symphony Orchestra (hard on the heels of Benny Goodman's band) tours the Soviet Union. An East Berlin theatre group is refused British permission to come and perform in London. Russian poets give readings in Paris and Rome but are not allowed to cross the Swiss frontier (no visas since the Soviet repression of the Hungarian revolution). Mr. Khrushchev opens and then closes a local exhibition of modern art, and one of his censors removes some seventy volumes from a U.S. book exhibit in Moscow.*

A conference in the U.S.S.R. between Russians and Britons is called off at the last moment by the Soviet authorities because in the current situation, "Russian writers are too busy. . . ." A conference in the U.S.A. between Americans and Russians is called off by the American organizers because contact with U.S. writers in the current situation might be "embarrassing."

As for the state of unofficial Western thinking about this whole problem which Herbert Luethy explores in this article, is it any less ambivalent, absent-minded, and uninformed?

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sciousness, or if you prefer, of ideology. The process that began nearly ten years ago and is now called "de-Stalinisation" has revealed inexorable implications: it amounts in principle to putting question marks not only against a few accidental evils of a personal tyranny, but against the very foundations of the régime, the dictatorship of the Party (and the dictatorship within the Party), the control of power and its delegation, the right of discussion—which is already almost the right of opposition—the right to information and to historical truth, the whole interpretation and justification of Soviet society. Nevertheless, the régime has now been trying for nearly ten years to kill the corpse of Stalin, trying in vain to repudiate the past without renouncing the inheritance.

THE CAUTIOUS LIFTING of the curtain, which allowed the faithful to see what lies they had believed and what crimes they had applauded, has been enough to sow doubts without imparting any new certitude. The Party was not always right; therefore it may not always be right now. It did not always incarnate the true meaning of history; therefore it does not possess the whole truth. It has admitted a great deal, but it could not explain how what it admits could have happened. The feeble explanation it offers—the "cult of personality"—is not only an insult to common sense but also to its own dogmas: to Marxism, to historical materialism, to the interpretation of its own power as a class instrument. Khrushchev's account of the matter is like a caricature of what generations of Marxists have ridiculed as "bourgeois idealism"— a grave matter for a régime whose only justification is ideological. It is always simpler to trust a lie, vigorously reaffirmed, than to stop on the slippery slope of a half-truth.

The Soviet régime is still tyrannical, but it is no longer paranoiac; that is, it is no longer inaccessible to reason. It does not always respect the truth of the facts, but at least it aims at credibility. It is still falsifying history, first and above all its own history, but no longer invents it as a whole, and even seeks to prove it. All this, you may say, is not much and will change little enough. But I believe it is a great deal. On the intellectual plane, with which we are here concerned, I would say that the Soviet system has become vulnerable to the truth, and this is the indispensable (and adequate) condition for a conversation.

WHAT HAS JUST been said about the recent evolution of the Soviet system does not justify any facile optimism. The interpretation of that development is, as we all know, a hazardous undertaking. I am wary of talk about "liberalisation" when a tyrannical government installs a few safety valves, or about "freedom" when certain symptoms of mental disquiet manage to show themselves—within narrow margins of toleration. There is no proof that the present change of climate is definitive, or irreversible. There is no guarantee that, at the first alarm, the Soviet régime might not reverse the engines, at the cost of a few convulsions, and return to the rule of terror for which the instruments are still available. The strait-jacket has been loosened; it has not been taken off.

As for co-existence—that dismal word which suggests a relation between things and not men —we are well aware that it is still co-existence between fundamentally hostile systems, and that to the Soviet régime this is no more than a makeshift, a temporary measure. The Soviet Union is still a powerful imperialist machine in the service of an ideology—or making use of an ideology—and it has sworn to "bury the capitalist world." The machine is now, militarily and economically, stronger than ever. That there is a crisis in the ideology of the system does not mean that it is becoming less aggressive. History suggests rather the contrary. It was in the days of its worst degradation, the most corrupt and the most cynical period following Thermidor, that the French Revolution set out to conquer the world by force.

Moreover, the diversification of the communist world and of its external relations is not only a source of weakness; it also multiplies the possibilities of manœuvre. In short, nothing in my remarks must be allowed to obscure the basic datum of our discussion: that we find ourselves confronted by a system which, although it is evolving, remains fundamentally hostile to the institutions, to the way of life, to the liberties and the rights of man as we conceive them. We are not discussing that basic hostility, but our own practical attitude towards a régime which, whether we like it or not, exists; and towards the men who, willy-nilly, are working and living under it.

MR. KHRUSHCHEV HAS DECLARED that "all our children will be communists in the end," and I have no doubt that he is ready to do anything to make them so. Very well: our demands are

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equally irreducible—we want all the children of Soviet citizens to be free men. I dare not say we are ready to do everything to make them so; but if that is what we really wish, we must consider what contribution we could make to it. Mr. Khrushchev is convinced, and I make no question of his sincerity, that until the whole world has become communist it will know no peace worthy of the name, but must be content with the cantankerous co-existence that we now endure. Conversely, I am certainly not alone in thinking that we shall have no international order worth the name until the communist régime acknowledges the plurality of the world and allows its subjects to enjoy freedom of individual thought and knowledge. These two propositions amount, in the end, to the same thing: until the world has overcome the schism that separates these two conceptions of man, its life will be, at the best, that of a hostile, painful, and dangerous co-existence.

It is in this perspective that I view the intellectual and personal relations between the two worlds. I exclude the idea that the schism can be overcome by the physical victory of one camp over the other, and therefore I see no ultimate hope except that of an internal evolution of the communist world in the direction of freedom and pluralism. But whether or not we share this point of view, we are not now concerned with comparisons of physical force: I am excluding from consideration any trials either of military strength or of its accompaniments of espionage, intimidation, and blackmail. Which does not prevent my stating the problem as a trial of spiritual strength.

There is no evading the challenge of a system which admits of nothing but assent or refusal. Since the Soviet Union proclaims, through its authorised spokesmen and by the new programme of the party in power, that co-existence implies as its corollary an "intensification of the ideological struggle," why should we pretend to ignore it? Our duty is to face the schism and, if possible, to seek out ways of overcoming it without the renunciation of anything we regard as essential.

In determining the nature of our relations with the East we have, in principle, the choice of two attitudes: one that is that of containment or *le cordon sanitaire*, which is the reaction of defence. The other is that of communication, which must be systematic, offensive, and probing.

It is not only as a reminder that I mention containment: that is the attitude one adopts towards danger, and it corresponds with the wishes behind much of the opinion on our side. It seeks to isolate the centre of infection, to discredit and boycott all communist countries morally and materially without distinction, creating a vacuum around their representatives and sympathisers. It would allow nothing but the most indispensable official contacts and the noisy propaganda contest that nobody now listens to.

The basis of this attitude, when it is anything more than fear, is a philosophy of the cold war which demands total and permanent mobilisation on the part of the free world. On the level of principle it is possible to argue that at length. But for my part, I confess I would stubbornly reject such an entirely negative attitude even if it were practicable, for I regard it as incompatible with a free society. I see it, indeed, as a spiritual abdication, in fact a defeatism which would all too promptly abandon to their fate and to their masters all those peoples that communism has subjected physically but not conquered spiritually. I will not believe it is our business to reinforce our side of all the iron curtains; we ought to do all we can to breach and break them down, or perforate them until they crumble.

But I may as well content myself by affirming that the policy of a spiritual *cordon sanitaire* is not practicable, and that in spite of the sometimes frantic efforts of the last forty-five years it never was practicable for the West, simply because the West itself rejects the police system of totalitarian government.

Stalin—especially during the last decade of his rule, with its brutal subjection of the Russian empire to ideology and the police, and its violent regimentation of the conquered peoples—succeeded in almost completely isolating the communist world. His successors, not without exposing their system of domination to very great risks, have broken out of this isolation. It is not for the West to re-impose it; and even if it wished to do so it would have no means to that end, short of war.

And I would add that even if the Western countries managed to sever relations of every kind with the communist countries, they would have succeeded only in isolating themselves from the Soviet bloc, not in isolating the Soviets from

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the vast world of neutrals which has developed in the last ten years. This means that, in the huge territories and populations of Asia, Africa, and now of Latin America, where the East and the West are in permanent contact and competition and where the balance is oscillating between free or totalitarian society, this self-isolation would bring no advantage to the West, but probably disadvantage.

By the very existence of this *tiers monde*, this "third world," we are obliged to accept confrontation and competition, and therefore contact and communication.

NOW LET US BE CLEAR: a *cordon sanitaire*, if it is to be effective, has to be complete. If the plan is not carried out to the end, if we do not break every human and spiritual as well as material contact, but only refuse to allow the establishment of any contact from our side and by our initiative, while we are unable to prevent those that the communist world can establish—thanks to the permeability of our liberal societies—then we have chosen the worst solution. And big words and grandiloquent declarations of "integral defence" will be only a disguise for mental laziness, confusion, and passivity.

Our refusal to act would leave the initiative in cultural and intellectual contacts to the communist governments and to such admirers and sympathisers as they can always find on our side. By declining to pursue a policy of presence in the East we should be helping to make those contacts that we cannot prevent into a one-way traffic of infiltration. We should even be giving the Soviet leaders the advantage of being able to pose as liberal in contrast to our McCarthyism.

And that is actually the way things too often happen. It was particularly and distressingly true of Western behaviour at the time of the post-Stalin "thaw." The West seemed to have lost its faith that among men it is freedom, free thought, spontaneous creation, and unblinkered research—in a word, heresy, and not tyranny—that is contagious. Obsessed by the vision of a communist empire peopled by robots in the service of a de-humanised conspiracy, the West was seized by a panic fear that the impending meeting between the two worlds would tend only to the spreading of communism. Confronted by the breakdown of the communist ideology, which in Poland, Hungary, and even in Russia itself was revealing its vulnerability to the ideas of freedom, the West showed itself incapable of understanding, acting, or even conceiving any appropriate response—I repeat that I am not thinking of military action—with the result that the spiritual bankruptcy of communism was matched by the impotence of an anti-communism which remained myopic, comfortable, and unresponsive.

A PAGE was turned in 1956. The West, as a consort of powers, showed that they would not question the physical empire of the communist régime over the peoples subjected to its domination, even when those people were in revolt and appealing for aid. The Soviet Union employed brute force to put down the insurrection and arrest defections; but it has not decided to re-establish absolute unity or complete isolation. This was the termination of a whole phase of the cold war and the end of the corresponding themes of propaganda, though they still haunt a few minds among us. In the conflict between East and West the aspect of ideological conflict has been superseded by the classic aspect of an antagonism between great armed powers disputing zones of domination and spheres of influence.

Henceforth the Soviet Union is seen by simple men, wherever they may be, as a powerful empire which has established its hegemony over an important area of the world, not as a revolution on the march. It is impressive to those who admire power, because of its force, its technical achievements, certain successes in the domain of social planning, and its loud predictions of ultimate victory. It lacks spiritual radiation; it has lost its fascination as a millennium or utopia movement; it can still seduce by its power and by arousing fear, but not hope. This is true in the countries of the West (including the communist West) where the Soviet Union is scarcely present at all except by force; but it is also increasingly true in the countries of the "third world." When I remember how many countries of South-East Asia and of the Middle East (and elsewhere) have, at one time or another in recent years, been said to be inexorably destined to succumb to communism, and how few of these prophecies of doom have been fulfilled, it seems to me that even in the regions of misery and hunger men have learnt to regard the great communist powers as imperialist systems—which may be usefully played off against others, but which there are also good reasons to fear.

The Soviet Union has ceased to be an idea incarnate since it has become a world power.

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I do not deny the political and military menace of the Soviet bloc to the West, but I deny the danger of ideological infection. Vienna has lived ten years under Soviet occupation, and even to-day that occupying power is only twenty miles away, but in Vienna you would think the Russians had never been there.

These things should enable us, too, to distinguish between the two planes of conflict, that of power and that of ideology, and teach us not to confuse the jockeying for strategic positions and spheres of influence with the debate between opposing conceptions of man, society, and history. To-day the two domains are no longer inseparable, if they ever were. And in the debate about ideas it is not we who need be afraid. It is the communist leaders who are now striving to restrict it, to control and reduce it to the exchanges of official manifestations and delegations which are supervised and hedged in by functionaries who repeat memorised lessons in order to exclude all spontaneity and any real personal contact.

Only in the tournaments of public propaganda and controversy, where nothing can be discussed in any depth, can the Communist State display the obvious and so much feared advantages that none but totalitarian states can command. Here, it may succeed in subjecting honest but often simple folk to the shock tactics of ideologues trained for the task. And controversy will be kept mainly at this artificial level so long as we leave the initiative to the East.

IT IS OUR BUSINESS to press the conversation beyond this dead-point, to render it systematic and searching, by breaking away from the narrow framework in which Eastern officialdom wants to confine it. We must patiently lever the dialogue out of the sterile polemics of cold war. And if we keep these two levels distinct, we shall also be able to distinguish between spokesmen, not only those we are confronting but those on our own side too.

For there are some men (and some régimes) fanatically hostile to communism and the Soviet Union, who are themselves by no means opposed to totalitarian methods. These may be close allies of the anti-Soviet bloc, but intellectually and morally they have nothing of our purpose. On the other hand, there are individuals who remain faithful to the original inspiration of the communist idea which has been an *idée-force* throughout the history of the West; or who continue to prefer Marx or Marxism as a philosophy or as an instrument of criticism of Western society. These we have no cause to regard as venal agents of the Kremlin, nor can we exclude them from a dialogue which is a research for common criteria of truth. In any case, that dialogue will never cease so long as our societies remain free and imperfect.

A further severance of relations with the East would not put a stop to this dialogue nor render it inoffensive. For it is not from Moscow or from Prague that the West is assailed by subversive ideas. Orthodox Marxism, as it is taught in the Soviet Union, has in fact lost all power as a propaganda. Degraded into an ideology that has ceased to be thought, it is no longer able to analyse or criticise the Western or Afro-Asian societies, still less present-day Russia.

What remains alive and active in Marxism to-day comes to us from the intellectual centres of the West, and not from Moscow. Our intellectuals are not fed upon *Voprossi Filosofii*, they read the authors the Kremlin detests, *e.g.* Jean-Paul Sartre, Ernst Bloch, and the condemned writings of Lukacs. And we could not prevent them without self-contradiction. Discussion, criticism, even the most vehement condemnation of our Western societies is fostered inside these societies themselves and forms an integral part of their spiritual life. We have made it a moral and political principle that our institutions are always open to question: the intellectual poisons that may reach us from the East are weak in comparison with those we distil for ourselves, and against which we are pretty well immunised. I would even say that contact with Western Marxism which is alive (and therefore heretical) is more dangerous to Soviet orthodoxy than to the West.

From the Eastern ideological standpoint, the simple fact that our societies tolerate intellectual and artistic heresy means that any living contact with the West is a seedling of heresy. For us, on the contrary, there cannot be too many contacts, there are all too few: we ought to seize every opportunity to enlarge and multiply contacts all over the fixed frontiers of the cold war.

IT SEEMS to me that in this respect something like an agreed doctrine has lately been beginning to emerge in the West. I would certainly not say that this amounts to a systematic intellectual and cultural "offensive," however, and I deplore all the opportunities still lost

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for want of imagination. To give one somewhat extreme example: I often wonder why, after having benevolently recognised the internal and external sovereignty of Byelorussia and the Ukraine, thus giving them seats at the United Nations as independent nations, the Western nations did not take advantage of this to establish populous embassies at Kiev and Minsk, fully equipped with press services, with cultural, commercial, and other attachés. It would have much embarrassed Moscow and given infinite pleasure to the Ukrainians and White Russians.

The West still reacts much more than it acts; but at least its actions no longer betray an inferiority complex. In the domain of cultural, scientific, commercial and university exchanges the United States has gone further, since 1958, than any other Western power, and does not seem to have suffered by it. All judgments of value set aside, the U.S.A. is quite impermeable to communist doctrine, whereas Russia, which lives and works under the slogan: 'catch up with and surpass the U.S.A,' is by no means immune to Americanisation. Significant also, I think, is the attitude of the churches, both Catholic and Protestant; on the one hand, an abandonment of any summary anathema, and on the other the welcome extended to the Russian Orthodox Church at the Ecumenical Council of Churches. Whether we welcome this evolution or not, we have anyhow to recognise it as a fact. From the side of the West, the policy of containment has had its day, and it is being superseded by the search for a dialogue on every level.

IF WE CONSENT to play our part in this dialogue, and do not let the debate decline into the elementary polemics about efficiency and quantitative standards of living, we soon discover that between the communists' aims and our own there still remain traces of a common language, of common origins and values which could render the dialogue possible and fertile. The spiritual crisis of communism in power, which has been implicit throughout its history and in all its agonies and its purges, is at bottom the contradiction between noble project and abject reality, between the end and the means, between a humanist inspiration and the technics of total power—in a word, between faith and the facts. For communist society, as it is expressly declared in the latest programme of the Soviet Communist Party, differs from all the societies in previous history, precisely in its being a society consciously invented and constructed. According to communist doctrine, man is a being who remains to be made.

It is in this challenge to the spontaneity of the social process that I see the fundamental problem of communist society, as that of a community of spiritual origins. The problem invites deep reflection, for we must not too lightly assume that the Western model of a society delivered to the spontaneity—and even the disorder—of material desires is self-evidently and indubitably convincing. Thus, in confronting the communist world, let us take care not to deny all that is common in our own spiritual origins, and therefore all possibility of conversation. For then we should be renouncing a part of our own heritage, and this (I can hardly forget it, writing this as it happens in the city of Jean-Jacques Rousseau) consists of something more than the apophthegms of pragmatic liberalism.

Lastly, the communist experiment is proceeding in the same world as ours: for 45 years we have been conflicting with, and influencing, one another; and now we both find ourselves facing certain problems that are common to mankind in the 20th century. It is not permissible for us to give up the hope that our debate, if sincerely and long enough pursued, will one day transcend our sterile quarrel, not by compromise but by knowledge. At the worst it will help us to know each other, and therefore to better knowledge of ourselves: the danger here, if it is a danger, we have to confront upon pain of abdication.

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Michel Butor

Thoughts on the Novel

The Individual & The Group

IT IS OFTEN suggested that the novel, in the modern post-Cervantes sense of the word, differs from the epic in that the latter relates the adventures of a group, the former those of an individual. But since Balzac, at any rate, it has become evident that the novel in its higher forms aspires to override this distinction, and to relate through the medium of individual adventures the movement of an entire society, of which it is itself only a detail, a significant point; for the totality which we call society, properly understood, consists not only of men but of all sorts of material and cultural objects. I should like therefore to try and elucidate not only the relation between the individual and the group within the novelist's story, but correlatively the effect of his work on such relations within the social setting in which it appears.

The medieval epic, the *chanson de geste*, belongs to a society of the old régime, strongly and clearly hierarchised with its feudal nobility. Within the body of individuals composing it there exists a clearly defined section, evident to all and known by all, which wields authority. Those who are not members of this group are "obscure," known only to their close acquaintance, whereas the noble is recognised and respected as such by everyone in his own country and neighbouring countries. The noble's authority rests on his fame; he is that part of our province which is well known to the outside world, and through which, therefore, people of other lands are made aware of our presence. Without him we should relapse into obscurity and be of no account. We should then be forced to belong to a different noble, to join up with another province; we should no longer be able to distinguish ourselves from it.

The hierarchy of the old régime is therefore not only political, it is above all semantic. Relationships of force and authority are subsidiary to a relationship of representation; the noble is the name. Of course mere force and violence cannot confer nobility. If a particularly stalwart peasant murders his young lord in some remote spot, he is not therefore acknowledged as the lord's successor by his fellows. His act was simply an absurd crime. In order for force to be adequately displayed it needs a setting: the field of battle (or the tournament), some setting which will allow it to become language.

In the battlefield, indeed, the warrior who strikes the hardest blows can help those around him; he will be the head of a small body which will break up if he is killed. To say that so-and-so is standing fast implies that the group of his companions is standing fast too. They will therefore be known by his name. When he speaks in his own name he is speaking in theirs too, for it is the same. There is no way of distinguishing them from the rest as a unit, save through him. Shakespeare calls Cleopatra "Egypt," the King of France "France," the Duke of Kent "Kent." In the relation between the suzerain and his vassals, the name acts as a connecting link: when people speak of the King of France, the word France refers to people and possessions, but inversely, when they speak of France's people and possessions, the word France refers to the king. It is thus quite legitimate that in such a context the history of a country should be the history of that country's kings, the story of a war the exploits of great captains.

As SOON AS a noble's name is uttered, we are immediately aware of all that it refers to: the land and its inhabitants, his liegemen, and all we know about them, immediately appear as a background against which the name stands out in full brilliance. But also, whatever stands out against such a background, whatever becomes illustrious, whatever can be identified and

MICHEL BUTOR *is one of the leading figures in the French movement for the "nouveau roman." A number of his novels have been translated and published in English:* Second Thoughts (*Faber, 1958*), Passing Time (*Faber, 1961*), Degrees (*Methuen, 1962*).

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acquires renown promotes the segregation of the whole. The light which the individual projects on to himself is reflected on those who surround him. The difference which he proclaims is not confined to himself as an individual; it differentiates the group for the first time. The creation of a new noble implies the recognition of a new province.

Becoming thus the name of a new region, it involves everything to which it previously referred, particularly the family which it served to designate. We are still familiar with this phenomenon to-day: within a large family, to distinguish the sub-groups, the name of the nearest or best-known member is used: grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins will ask for news of the Henrys or the Charleses, or how things are going at Madeleine's or Geneviève's. The hero who acquires renown confers his own distinction on his wife and children too. While others' families remain unknown, his becomes famous. The whole cell moves into the foreground.

THUS THE WHOLE OF SOCIETY is reconstructed in each man's consciousness, and in order that this may go on, it is indispensable that any display of power within a setting of nobility and truth should correspond to the giving of a name, that every good soldier should be ennobled, and moreover that the possession of a name should be counterbalanced by the possibility of displaying physical power, and *"une valeur,"* if not in war, then at least in a tournament or, as a last resort, in a duel. Failing which, it is no longer clear why these particular people should bear these names. The noble must consequently maintain the renown of his name. His life, his exploits must unceasingly foster the metaphorical bonds which connect him with what he represents.

Clearly, the role that the Epic is to play in the equilibrium of such a society is indispensable. Except in times of crisis or of glory, it keeps alive the awareness of what enabled one particular family to become the name of a whole body of people. If for too long a period the representative of a province, the duke, count or earl, has failed to get himself talked about in the neighbouring regions, the whole of his people will be forgotten too. If his vassals no longer have cause to talk of him amongst themselves, they will cease to put their trust in him, and will inevitably start looking for someone else better fitted to represent them. But when present exploits are lacking, former ones can replace them—and indeed, provided the narrator's language acquires sufficient substance and his words are well strung together in recognisable form, so much the better, for some bygone exploit (which at its time was indistinguishable from a hundred others) will become, thanks to the poet who takes it as his theme, the exemplar of such exploits, the most famous, the one by which all present deeds are judged. So a family which has lost much of its glory will regain it to a considerable extent in the songs of its minstrel.

So at times when the feudal organisation is in danger of dissolution through the incapacity of certain nobles, the epic may save a whole family from the obscurity that threatens to overwhelm it, and a whole nation from the chaos and inevitable war which would follow from such a decline. The *Gerusalemme Liberata* is a last effort of genius to try and restore to noble families the lustre they were rapidly losing.

BUT EVEN IN Tasso's time the classic themes of the epic were no longer adequate, for they bore no relation to what, in actual fact, can make a man known or bring him power. The physical or moral qualities of an individual no longer enable him to organise a group around him in battle, because the art of war has grown so complicated. So many instruments are now interposed between the arm and the wound, that the bravest man is always at the mercy of a bullet or cannon-ball fired from afar by an invisible foe who may be an utter coward and weakling. Single combat—that central episode in the wars and *chansons de geste* of medieval times, their point of highest significance, their moment of truth—no longer has any meaning. Henceforward fighting takes place in confusion and obscurity. All the traditional exploits are out of date, and, it is no longer possible to acquire or maintain a name in this way. Nobility, with all the advantages appertaining to it, begins to appear more and more as something unjust, although perhaps necessary; the impression is gaining ground that those who are in the best places are not the best people, that their position is due only to chance, to something arbitrary which is hopefully thought of as supernatural. Now, and not before, as we know, the theory of Divine Right takes shape.

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These people can no longer make us known. They are not qualified in any way to do so, and moreover we can make ourselves known without their help. The development of learning and commerce has given us an awareness of the universe and of other nations and states, which is independent of the nobility. Formerly the best way to find out something about England was to see its King. If he was rich, that meant his country was rich; if his courtiers were numerous, that meant his country was well organised, and he was properly in contact with it. All these signs which were once so clear, and in which people still believed at the time of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, are now devoid of meaning. Everyone knows that there is no longer any relation between the jewels worn by sovereigns and the resources of their nations, that if Louis XIV is surrounded by a host of courtiers it is precisely because he chooses to do without them in his contacts with his provinces. The king, consequently, is still in authority, but he is no longer representative.

The nobles have authority, but nobody knows why. Since nobility implies no quality, it must be a quality in itself. It becomes completely closed: nobody can possibly "become" a noble, you have to be "born" one. Don Quixote finds himself confronted with a closed nobility: the world he lives in offers him no way of winning fame. The lessons he learns from the romances of chivalry can only render him ridiculous. He calls himself Don Quixote de la Mancha, but he cannot get anyone else to call him so except in mockery.

But if nobility has nothing more to say, it is because there is another language and other representative people who must be spoken of, or who can speak for themselves. If I know that the King of England is no longer representative of his country, it is because I have met sailors and drapers who seem to me to represent it far more powerfully, to whom even nobles turn to-day.

THE ORIGINAL NOVEL-HERO, then, is someone who emerges from the obscurity of the bourgeoisie or working class and climbs the social ladder without succeeding in becoming integrated into the nobility. He consorts with them; he is soon as well known as they are, or better. He is consequently a proof of the fact that the existing hierarchy of society is only a semblance. The fundamental theme of the 18th-century novel is that of the *parvenu*, the upstart, (Le Sage, Marivaux, Fielding); the narrator tells us how he has climbed so high, how he has managed to write the book that ladies are now reading. He is really far cleverer than all the nobles who have not had to do anything to attain their rank. By his rise, he proclaims that the accepted organisation of society has another hidden within it. The Epic showed us, at times when we were doubtful of it, that society really was organised as it appeared to be. The Novel, on the contrary, discloses a secret hierarchy in opposition to the accepted one. The noble no longer represents what he claims to represent; one might even say he no longer governs what he appears to govern. Even before the upstart had succeeded *sur le plan romanesque*, in asserting his triumph as a well-bred man, a man of good society, a man speaking the fine language once peculiar to the nobility, a strange sort of novel-hero had succeeded the noble hero of former times—the criminal, surrounded by a whole counter-aristocracy revealed to us by the picaresque novel. Thus "Lazarillo de Tormès" introduced the reader into a fascinating region, close at hand, an unknown mysterious world in which everything took on a different meaning. This man is supposed to obey that man; look closer, and you'll see that it's the other way about. The nobility once combined power and light; now it possesses only an undeserved light, and power is associated with darkness. While princes parade, unknown figures moving in the shadows, almost without anyone's knowledge, wield authority and power. It is to these that one must turn if one hopes to rise in the world, but it is better, of course, to say nothing about one's association with them. Only fiction can transmit the password. Such men are capable of levelling almost miraculously those obstacles that had seemed insurmountable.

THE PICARESQUE NOVEL reveals to its reader the innards, *les dessous et les coulisses*, of society. We all know the royal court, now indeed a closed circle but one whose magnificent pageantry is famous far and wide; here is a court in reverse, in some respects more like what a court should be (and used to be) than the existing court. Can this ragged figure passing by, whom but for my novel-reading I should never have noticed, be in fact the chief of a veritable army? Does he possess treasures hidden in caves? Is he capable of those exploits that nobles can no longer perform and can he call forth from

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his companions that sort of loyalty that we meet with nowhere else nowadays? In that case, is this world of night and falsehood less false than the world of daylight? Can this be the last refuge of truth, the last place where an individual's qualities can be displayed?

When the *parvenu* gains access to the world of light and language, he does so as an individual whose family ties are stretched to breaking-point—the nobles (into whose sphere he has moved without being able to become one of them) are still set apart from him by their birth; but this is inevitably accompanied by a transformation in society's awareness of itself. The *parvenu* is proud of being read by ladies, but he writes above all for other potential upstarts. He encourages them, offers them his own example, shows them how to look for the real power-relations and social groupings that underlie accepted forms. He undeceives his reader, teaches him to be wary and to conspire. He substitutes the rough, secretive teaching of the brigand for the futile lessons of chivalric romances.

THE THEME of the secret society is a fundamental one in the novel, particularly in the nineteenth century. The novelist then first becomes aware that his work itself, by uncovering the shady side of things, destroying appearances and revealing secrets, is going to form the nucleus of an unobtrusive group, an association between readers, that he has introduced a new, positive and effective relationship into the midst of those which he has been exposing or offering as models. The allusion to some particular character or detail will enable them to recognise each other without the knowledge of outsiders, to distinguish themselves from non-readers, from the unaware and the uninitiated. It will give rise to a certain language, a grouping of conversations and affinities. Being common property, with common references, it will reveal to them what they have in common.

With Proust, this theme assumes a particularly striking form, since it is the nobility itself (once the best-known, indeed the only well-known part of society) which takes on this aspect. The link between the name of a person and the name of a region has definitely been overstretched, and so the aristocracy has become unknown to the man in the street. It is merely a memory. But extremely clear power-relations persist within it none the less. In actual fact, the pitiable old man whom we encounter as we did the ragged beggar a short while ago, has only to speak a word to dissipate the barrier that confronts us—not only within his own closed circle, but also (thanks to snobbery, and to the fascination that bygone glory still exerts over people who are extremely powerful to-day yet uncertain of their own value) over a whole social fringe that clings to it.

The aristocracy, thus inverted, is in contact with that *monde renversé*, that secret society *par excellence*, the world of homosexuals. Already in Balzac sexual inversion served as a metaphor for that overturning of the social hierarchy which is one of the novel's key moments: Vautrin is the Napoleon of jailbirds. With Proust, Charlus, prince of that secret society which the Faubourg Saint-Germain has become, is also Morel's slave.

IT IS VERY important that the novel itself should comprise a secret. The reader must not know at the beginning how it is to end. It must bring about a change in myself; I must have learnt, by the end, something which I did not previously know, that I had not guessed, that others cannot guess without having read it, and this finds particularly clear expression, as might be expected, in such popular forms as the detective story.

We see thus that individualism in the novel is only on the surface. The rise of an individual is one of the main themes of the classical novel, but it is impossible to describe this without at the same time describing the architecture of a social group, or more exactly without transforming the picture that this social group has of its own organisation, which sooner or later transforms that structure itself. The novel is the expression of a changing society; it soon becomes the expression of a society that is conscious of change.

THE NOVELS of the eighteenth century allowed us to move from one level to another within the social edifice without any sense of disturbing its order. Since only a few upstarts succeeded in climbing out of their place, the structure as a whole remained fairly stable. But soon the changes were to become so obvious that some account had to be given of them.

So long as the nobility (even uprooted) remains distinct and well-known, the novel can be constructed around an isolated individual who emerges from his original background to climb the social ladder without overturning it. His

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achievement, or his story, will add another panel to society's picture of itself, completing the first. And it is clearly in the interests of the nobility, of *"le beau monde,"* to insist on the isolation of the writer, or his protagonist. It is most fascinating: a ploughman's son, or a grocer's, comes into contact with dukes, and teaches dukes about ploughmen and grocers, but on condition that ploughmen, taken as a whole, will remain ploughmen, their allegiance to the nobility unchanged. The upstart will be a member of the household, of the *salon*, if he adopts its language, if he has acquired some polish, if he has assumed the manners, the culture which is recognised as a model, if he can take people in, if his humble origin is not too obvious. And the essential originality of his nature, the fact that he is an exception, must be corrected and toned down, according to a code against whose increasingly absurd and severe laws he will soon react violently. The ploughman's son must talk not as ploughmen do, but as dukes ought to. He will soon be the only witness to their language, a witness whose purity they will seek to guard. For the dukes themselves, to show their sophistication, will vulgarise their own talk, pepper their speech with the expressions of the populace.

The divorce between the nobility and its language, of which the upstart story-teller becomes aware as he first gains access to the latter, forces him to withdraw into himself. Where style is concerned, he finds the same contradiction between apparent power and real power. The nobles force him to speak a language they themselves have abandoned; they harry him for using expressions which betray his origin, but which they themselves, on the other hand, tend increasingly to use. Underneath the professed rule of a certain form of speech can gradually be discerned its very opposite. The true power lies elsewhere, in that region from which he has risen but from which he has carefully cut himself off, a region which is not yet ready to listen to him and is still unable to read. The support of the nobility has begun to fail him; it is collapsing and it has grown increasingly suspicious. He thus finds himself isolated in the midst of a crowd that does not yet understand him, deserted by an aristocracy that refuses to understand him.

THE THEME OF THE UPSTART gradually climbing up the social ladder, while remaining an outsider, was to be replaced, little by little, during the 19th century, by that of the individual, noble by nature, if not by birth, whose aristocratic spirit is contrasted with the ruined aristocracy. He feels lost as he confronts an opaque crowd, that massive obscure power which has no obvious representatives. As the biography of an individual has become the very type of the novel-form, he will envisage the crowd as a huge individual, but an individual who is necessarily incomplete, since one cannot speak to him, since he cannot answer with words—not a collective man, therefore, but a collective animal, not a common consciousness but a massive unconsciousness, incapable of reasoning and of all but the most elementary emotional reactions.

In the famous description of the Battle of Waterloo in the *Chartreuse de Parme*, it is clear that heroic and illustrious deeds are no longer possible, as they were a few years earlier in the revolutionary wars. Armies are now reduced to crowds passively obeying orders the reasons for which they cannot understand. And Fabrice, the spectator, who longed to win glory, is not even capable of distinguishing their hierarchy:

"A quarter of an hour later, from something said by a hussar beside him, Fabrice gathered that one of these generals was the celebrated Marshal Ney. He could not however, guess which of the four generals was Marshal Ney. . . ."

Stendhal himself admirably indicates the distance dividing contemporary warfare, a clash between passive crowds led by unseen individuals, from the wars of chivalry:

"He had begun to think himself the intimate friend of all the soldiers amongst whom he had been galloping for the last few hours. He imagined between himself and them the noble friendship of Tasso's and Ariosto's heroes. . . ."

A few moments later: "He began to weep bitterly. One by one he discarded his fine dreams of chivalrous and sublime friendship, like that of the heroes of the *Gerusalemme Liberata*. . . ."

Whereas in the world of the epic, language is current from end to end of society, each noble in his domain being able to communicate with the humblest member, and the conversation of nobles amongst themselves establishing an uninterrupted flow of consciousness, here the individual, of noble spirit but lost amid the crowd, is confronted with a catastrophic cleavage. Everyone seems to be speaking the same language, and yet communication proves impos-

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sible between the novelist (or his hero, withdrawn into himself) and that threatening mass. These people with whom he cannot make contact, and yet who are, as he clearly sees, at the origin of all power and hence the subject *par excellence* of his stories, will have to be described by him as if they were animals, and soon as if they were objects. But this tendency of the naturalistic novel towards total externality —which is, in fact, the crisis of the individualist novel, the moment when its inadequacy is revealed—is presently to make the novelist utterly incomprehensible to himself. Forced to recognise that in spite of his differences he is one of these people, he will be consumed, as it were, by the absolute detachment of his attitude towards them. The remoteness he intends to maintain with regard to whatever is not himself will soon penetrate his own personality. He will be in danger of emptying himself out, in a sort of frantic flight.

As for "socialist realism," it may be said to consist of a simple juxtaposition of crowd behaviour with individual adventures, without succeeding in establishing any authentic middle term between these. It remains at the level of a false epic, in which the organic link provided by the nobility has been abolished while nothing has been found to take its place. Whereas its purpose is to throw light on the activity of a human group, it merely succeeds in showing us passive masses on the one hand, individual adventures on the other, but deprived of any true originality with respect to the setting in which they take place. We skip from the biography of the indispensable leader to the behaviour of the crowd, whom he controls without being able to establish any continuity between them. The only role that this sort of literature can play is that of upholding the established hierarchy. In spite of all its efforts it fails to justify it clearly, as the inner link is missing; so this hierarchy is forced to control it constantly, whereas in the epic such control was quite unnecessary. The novelist of socialist realism is thus always, despite his good intentions, an individual lost in an alien crowd whose rulers mistrust him; the very fact that he consents to be controlled shows that he is aware of the maladjustment. The literature of socialist realism is a degraded epic, which has adopted certain methods from the novel but which is still awaiting its *Don Quixote*. Only a profound renewal of the structure of narrative can enable so grave a contradiction to be overcome, can consequently enable the novel to play, in those countries where socialist realism is current to-day, its true role as an advance guard of consciousness, to display its basic progressive activity. It is evident that all the great works of the past will give us precious suggestions in this quest.

It is essential that the story should grasp society as a whole, not from outside, like a crowd scanned from the point of view of an isolated individual, but from within, like something to which one belongs, and from which individuals, however original and outstanding they may be, will never be able to detach themselves completely.

All speech is primarily a dialogue, that is to say it cannot be the expression of an isolated individual. Any utterance implies a first and a second person. I am aware of what people are saying to each other before I know who they are, and the two poles confronting one another define themselves correlatively for me. The society to which I belong is a whole in which anyone can speak to anyone else, but this whole is divided up and organised into sub-sections. I don't speak to every member of it in the same way; there are certain words that some people don't know and won't understand, certain allusions, references, suggestions which will only function for others, those in particular who have read the same books as myself. It is thus that the existence of a novel will automatically determine a group of possible dialogues, its characters, its events being so many references and examples put at the disposal of those who have read it, directly or indirectly (*i.e.*, through reading a summary of it, hearing it spoken of, etc....). It is easy to see that the "language" of an individual will be strictly determined by the different groups to which he belongs within society, and that the elements of diverse origin will be able to organise themselves and unite in original ways, sometimes so original that he may himself become his only possible interlocutor. If he fails to break down this wall, then his language will dissolve into its elements, or destroy the isolated individual through madness or suicide. But if, on the contrary, he succeeds in making himself understood, it is because the pattern of the group of which he is a characteristic example has become increasingly common; the synthesis or the invention which is realised through him is valid for others beside himself; it will gather

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together homologous individuals amongst whom he will institute a mode of communication, to whom he will give strength; it will organise an original group which can effect a profound transformation of the whole aspect of society and the whole of its language.

IN THE SAME WAY that on beginning geometry one considers lines as being made up of points, and that one is soon forced to reverse the process and to define a point as the intersection of two lines, so the novelist begins by imagining a group as the sum of its individuals, until the time when he is forced to admit that an individual can only be defined as the meeting-point between several groups.

If I begin a story by declaring that so-and-so is a ploughman's son, the two characters only appear to me in their relation to one another, and in their common situation within a social whole to which I myself belong, so huge that it has to be defined in space or in time. If I add that he is fair-haired, it is because he is thereby distinguished from other ploughmen's sons, or at least from other members of the whole group, and because this distinction is somehow important, since in the setting of my story it is either an advantage or a disadvantage to be fair-haired; if I say he was tall, it means taller than other people, or taller than ourselves, etc....

Individualism in the novel is only an illusion, but an illusion which has had grave consequences on the theory of the novel, and which we need to counteract to-day.

Let us go back to our earlier example: an 18th-century *parvenu*, whose father was a ploughman and who will end by consorting with a duke. Once he has reached the top, the words ploughman and duke still retain roughly the same meaning, the distance between the two conditions is still roughly the same. The hierarchy thus appears as an invariable factor, in relation to which the individual's position changes, while his personality is gradually enriched. But if we look closer we see that this invariability is merely an abstraction, and that more and more, as the number of upstarts increases, we are obliged to take into account the alteration that has occurred during the course of the story in the hierarchy itself; so that what changes is not merely the position of the individual upstart but that of all three individuals who served as reference marks. Let us call them A, B, C. I shall soon find it impossible to go on as if the distance between B and C remained constant. The story will no longer be that of A going from B to C, but the transformation of the figure ABC into A′B′C′.

Very special conditions will be needed, then, if we are to follow the evolution of an individual step by step, just as very special conditions are needed in order to observe the behaviour of a crowd from outside. The general case is that of the joint evolution of various individuals within a social group that is being more or less rapidly transformed.

THE LINEAR FORM of novel structure is consequently replaced by a polyphonic structure. The 18th-century letter-novel already showed us a clear polyphony of individual adventures. All the great novels of the 19th century were to add to this a polyphony of social backgrounds. Each character exists only in his relations to what surrounds him: people and material (or cultural) objects. The concept of a ploughman had seemed an unchanging one; I can no longer use it to characterise my hero once and for all. Moreover, either the ploughman-father is not like other ploughmen and that is why his son enjoyed advancement, or else he is like other ploughmen, and in that case all ploughmen's sons can enjoy it too provided they encounter certain people, or certain circumstances, which then themselves become characteristic. In other words, it is the upstart's career which enlightens us as to his origin, and consequently his father's personality, or anyone else's, only becomes known to us in relation to his own; this naturally takes place at different stages, and the individuals are distinguished gradually, with reference to a crowd which forms the background.

What is clear, and enlightening, is the pattern, either stable or shifting, within which I can insert myself *qua* reader, at one spot or another, considering things from one point of view or another. The individual in the novel can never be completely determined; there is always an opening for me to put myself in his place, or at least take up a position in relation to him.

But if one can take up a position at different points in a pattern, this being implicit in polyphonic writing, does it not follow that the reader's journey through it can be made in several ways? It is rare for the adventures of an individual to be so outstanding in relation to other people that his biography can be written in linear fashion, following its chronological order. Surely it is more usual for individuals to evolve in relation to one another during the

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same period of time. If sometimes there seems an unquestionably right order in which the adventures must be related, at other times there often seem to be several equally good solutions, so that the decision to tell one thing before another may actually seem an arbitrary one. Should not the transition from linear narrative to polyphonic narrative lead us in quest of mobile forms? We know that the advance of polyphonic thought in contemporary music has led composers to face the same question.

LET US IMAGINE a correspondence between two people. If each of them waits until the other has answered to write in his turn, the letters can naturally be set out in chronological order. But if they write more often, each sending a letter a day, answering the letter of the day before, we shall have two series crossing one another, and it will prove extremely hard to find a justification every time for giving priority to one or other of the two contemporary documents. To isolate the two series would be a poor solution, since one would lose the important sequence formed by the letters of both correspondents. The document ought therefore to be arranged so that those which were written at the same time should come before the reader's eye simultaneously, for instance A's letter on the left-hand page facing B's on the right-hand page. Then we should have a coherent *mobile* in which the reader can vary his course, reading the double pages now in the usual order left/right, now reversing that order, now reading the series of right-hand pages or left-hand ones.

If we increase the number of correspondents, what was exceptional becomes the rule, and more and more letters will be coincident or intercalated. The study of the visual properties of that material object, a book, will enable wholly new solutions to be found for such problems. It will not only open up vast new prospects for the art of the novel but will put at the disposal of each one of us instruments with which to grasp the behaviour of the groups to which we belong.

Pietà

A year ago you came
Early into the light.
You lived a day and night,
Then died; no-one to blame.

Once only, with one hand,
Your mother in farewell
Touched you. I cannot tell,
I cannot understand

A thing so dark and deep,
So physical a loss:
One touch, and that was all

She had of you to keep.
Clean wounds, but terrible,
Are those made with the Cross.

James McAuley

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Ray Gosling

The Love of a Little Man

THE OTHER MORNING I awoke to the chirping of birds. Or to be more exact and I want to be exact, it was when I first heard these ordinary little brown sparrows all in the key of C saying "Good morning. Get you. Good morning." It was then that I first thought "I have woken up. I am no longer asleep." But can I be sure that is true? Because before I had finished thinking, "that is sparrows," I heard a hawk, a raven, an eagle swoop down on one of those sparrows. I saw the half-eaten body of a sparrow; a dead pigeon squashed flat on to the tarmac of the boulevard. I saw the cat next door where I lived as a child walk slowly up our garden path with a little bird in its mouth. And Mrs. H., she screamed from her window, and came running through our back only to be too late for the bird was dead. And she took the bird from the cat; and then the cat away in her arms, smacking it and saying: "Naughty Tiggy, naughty Tiggy, you shouldn't have done that. Naughty Tiggy. You are a naughty girl." Only I remember that Tiggy was a gelded male.

And at this moment, remembering the sex of the cat I opened my eyes, squinted into the half-world of an anonymous morning, and pitchforked my mind on to those real questions—where am I? What day, year, month? Is it B.C. or A.D.? Am I alive? Am I awake? and the last question of all, asked as a matter of pure academic interest—what is the time, a.m., or p.m.?

I was in my own room, in my own flat, but the beds—they had been moved. She was still there. I knew her name. She was not only a body. I knew her name. She had a face. Sniffed—the air was thick with two people having had too many pints of too rough a common beer the night before, or was it the day before the night before?

But the beds; our two single beds lay side by side, together, like twins. This has never happened before. We used to sleep in the other bedroom which has a large double bed, but then we had a row. So now, a mate of mine, Jim, and his girl who moved in about a month ago have the double-bedded room; and we the room with the two singles. We're speaking to each other again, but we haven't changed the bedrooms. When we go together at night now, we sleep in one of the single beds. When we don't go together which is more often than not, then I sleep in my bed which is by the kitchen wall, and she sleeps in hers by the back yard window.

But this other morning, the two beds had been moved together, by the back yard window, on her side. The birds are still singing. I am sure they are singing now. It must be dawn. There's a great light like "Revelation" coming through the fluted glass of the passage door; a yellow ball of light. That's good—red sky in the morning, the shepherd's warning—that's good. Lean over to the back yard window. There's a light coming from that way, yellow too—must be a Revelation. That side's the sunset side. Sister sleeps softly and smells. She's gurgling, sweating, deep in sleep in the bed alongside mine. She had a dream about The Bomb the other night and it quite upset her it did.

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Draw the curtain. Brave the world. In the yard on a motor-bike is a man. How very strange. He must be next door. Have never seen him though. Wonder if he saw me; and I'm naked to the waist. Draw the curtains together again. How very strange some awakenings are. Naked to the waist. Wearing my jeans beneath the sheets.

LET ME TRY to remember last night, clearly, truthfully—recollection. I came in and the place was in darkness. I put on the passage light. Jim came out into the corridor in a blue wool dressing-gown and asked if he could have the key to the back door because he wanted to be sick. I never saw Jim's girl. She must have been in bed. Come to think of it I never saw Jim come back from the yard.

Being more refined than Jim I went to the smallest room which is right down at the far end of the passage, and found the lavatory bowl full to the brim. There was a cloth along the door. The window was shut tight, and this smell of an all-powerful cleanser, and a bottle of the stuff standing in the bath, a large bottle but almost empty. Drink a bottle of that and you're dead, I thought. Good job it's empty. I remembered buying it yesterday myself because the lavatory was blocked and the man at the shop told me it would shift anything. Obviously it hadn't. So I took my long drain down the basin. Why didn't Jim want to cough up down the basin? Why the yard? That man must be sentimental. And after my long pee, I disinfected the basin, and then washed my hands; and thinking to myself five bottles of giant size all-powerful cleanser, and still a brimful. We shall have to find a plumber. The bathroom had become too clean, clinically clean, like a hospital, obscenely clean.

The morning smell: she must have been oozing it out all night, that sweet wet Shippoes of Nottingham beer and mild. Am I glad we didn't sleep together last night. But why is my bed not on my side of the room? Why have the two beds been put together, mine alongside hers?

I got it—last night we had a row in the last bar we went in. We always seem to have rows in that bar. No reason, but some bars, some streets even seem to be fated. Walk down that one together, and you're sure to be raughting by the time you get to the end. Don't know why we ever go into that pub. But that was it. Whatever fine mood there was had gone. We were silent going home on the trolley. When we got in, she said she wanted to go to sleep. She always says she wants to go to sleep. I was not going to sleep. What were beds made for; why did we get a flat together; why am I supposed to pay the rent. Why?

Tried to coax her into my bed, force myself into hers. She turned sober. "No. You got to suffer for all your pride. You moved us out of the double bed. You move us back in."

"You get this wrong. We moved out because you went off. . . ."

So, the sad sober. . . . Why to God do we have to go through all this stupid load of bulls, this daft bloody argy-bargy. Why can't we accept ourselves as two bums together, two no-hopers—well, I do—but she doesn't. That's the crunch of the trouble. It's her fault. All her fault.

MY MIND was made up. I was not going to sleep before I'd had some packing. In fury I got up. Tore out of bed. Puts on my jeans. Turn on the lights. Light a cigarette. Pace the room.

She sits up in bed. "Turn off that light. I want to go to sleep. Smoke in the dark. Smoke in the light in the other room, but leave me alone. I want to go to sleep."

Glowers at her. Blew smoke rings. I stopped pacing the floor to stare at her.

"Right"—and up she jumps, all teeth grating and eyes popping, wearing only her drawers. I remember thinking—how pretty she looks jumping up like that, just in her blue drawers. And then she lammed me, twice, hard, bloody hard right across the chops; then across my ear. It stung.

Thought. Quick as a flash. Don't hit her

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back. So I yelled out "Quit it." And then I thought, quick as a flash—don't shout or Jimmy might come in. Let's keep this in the family, between ourselves. Suffer in silence. She hits me a couple more times. Then she shouts "Aren't you going to hit me back?"—and she looked surprised. Thought slowly, that maybe I did the wrong thing. Maybe I should have hit her back. I might have lost, but we could both have forgotten it. This is the problem with passive resistance. One goes in ready to be a martyr for the cause, for peace and quiet and finish up mildly surprised that you have come off better. I feel good. She feels guilty. She looked all pained and hurt, and went back into the bed, and crept beneath the sheets. Don't remember noticing whether she looked so pretty in her pants going back to the bed, though that is the time when they should have looked pretty.

I kept the light on. My face stung, felt numb. Took a couple of drags at my cigarette. How did that cigarette escape damage? I don't know, but it was still there, intact. I took a couple of drags at it. Stubbed it. Turned out the light. Got straight back into my own bed, without taking off my jeans. Then, and I don't know why, but I started to shed tears, uncontrollably, sobbing. Normally I just don't cry, at anything. My heart can bleed but I never show tears. I can moan and whimper away from my very soul, but there are never any physical tears. Yet last night I went berserkly pouring out this eye-water. Just couldn't stop.

Over she comes. Hugs me. Holds me. Her hands through my hair. Her face against mine but first—a crafty one—she puts her fingers round my eyes to make sure. I'm really crying. And I held her, and I stopped the sobbing; and I thought you stupid bogger going to bed in your jeans. You could have her now if you played it right. You could have her, the rows and the fight all forgotten, all made up for and doubly.

All I said was: "It's alright now pet. Don't you worry. It'll be alright now." And putting her into bed all snug, and tucking her up, and giving her a maternal, fraternal, sisterly good-night kiss I lay back on my own bed, dried my eyes on the corners of the sheet, and dropped straight into sleep.

Last thing I remember was seeing a row of packets—*Ola*, *Daz*, *Vim*, *Omo*—three-letter words like *Pis*; and then a row of packets with four-letter words like *Piss*, *Surf*, *Tide*, *Quix*—washing wonders, washing-up wizards, but why do none of them have a five-letter word. And the very last thought of all—*Persil*, now that's a five-letter one.

This waking up in the morning, and trying to remember it all. But for all that I have tried, diligently, to remember I can't fathom how the beds got together. But I do know they were together before she hit me, because she had to jump over the lot in her pretty blue pants.

I ROSE. Got up out of the bed, and went into the front room and started to dial for the time because I couldn't find my watch, but before I'd finished dialling the church clock started to strike over the road. So I put down the receiver. Why waste a threepenny bit when God can give it to you for free, that's what I say. That church clock will be next year's nightmare. That tinny, shrill, piercing "dang." And outside was the great yellow sun. Five o'clock. And I thought, this isn't my time to be up. I lit a cigarette. Took a pee down the washbasin. Cleaned my teeth. Must call in that plumber. And went back to bed in my jeans. Through the bedroom window the dawn was grey. The sun had moved away. And I smoked and dozed to the birds and her gurglings. How did these beds get together?

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Alastair Reid

Notes on Being a Foreigner

I COME SUDDENLY into a foreign city, just as the lamps take light along the water, with some notes in my head. Arriving—the mood and excitement, at least, are always the same. I try out the language with the taxi driver, to see if it is still there; and later, I walk to a restaurant which was lurking round a corner in my memory. Nothing, of course, has changed; but cities flow on, like water, and, like water, they close behind any departure. We come back to confirm them, even although they do not particularly care. Or perhaps we come back to confirm ourselves?

By the time I have finished dinner, I find I have to make an effort to remember the place I left, how it felt, at least. Matches and toothpaste are the only continuities; once they are used up, the previous existence from which they came has withered and died. I walk along the snowy *quais* in the lamp-lit dark, breathing a tangle of strangeness and familiarity. Places are a little like old clothes. Wearing them brings nostalgia snowing down. There is both shock and recognition.

How easy it is to fall at once into the habits of a place, most noticeably the eating habits—to dine very late in Spain, to eat heartily in England, to change the whole conception of breakfast, to order certain kinds of drink instinctively. Another country is a new self, I am tempted to say—until I notice all the signs of the old self showing through.

Later, I telephone two or three friends, and am instantly drawn into a web of appointments, talk, question-and-answer, the nowheres of friendship, which supersede language, time, place. And somewhere, one of my friends is saying to someone I do not know yet: "So-and-so is coming for a drink. He is a foreigner."

NATIVES (an ugly word but irreplaceable) feel oddly toward foreigners. They may be hostile, aggressive, over-friendly, distant, or possessive; but at least they have the (to them) advantage of being in possession, so that, between foreigners and themselves, there is a moat, with a drawbridge to which they keep the keys. Typical native gambits: "Why, we almost consider you one of us!" Or "What do you think of *our* (railways, King, public lavatories)?" Or "Are you familiar with our expression. . . ?" So much for their feelings. They have the assurance of Being In Possession.

AND THE FOREIGNER? It depends on whether he is a foreigner by Necessity, Accident, or Choice. One thing, however, is sure: unless he regards being a foreigner as a positive state, he is doomed to be a loser. If he has already chosen not to belong, then all the native gambits are bound to fail. But if he aspires to being a native, then he is forever at the mercy of the natives, down to the last inflexion of the voice.

AN EXPATRIATE shifts uncomfortably, because he still retains, at the back of his mind, the awareness that he has a true country, more real to him than any other he happens to have selected. Thus, he is only at ease with other expatriates. They justify one another, as they wait about in the sun for the arrival of mail or money. Eventually, they are driven to talk of plumbing, the ultimate sign of the superiority of their own civilisation. Whatever they do or write or say

ALASTAIR REID *is a young poet who grew up in Scotland, but since the war has chosen to be a foreigner, living variously in the United States, France, Spain, Switzerland, and North Africa.*

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has its ultimate meaning for them Back Home. "Yes, but you have to make it in Boston," I once heard from a fanatical expatriate. What's more, he said it in Spanish.

EXILES, as opposed to expatriates, either wither away, or else flourish from being transplanted, depending on whether they keep alive any hope of returning to what they left, or abandon it completely as forever inaccessible. The hope of returning to the past, even at its faintest, makes for a vague unease, a dissatisfaction with the present. The Spanish exiles I have known have been, for the most part, unhappy; Spain, after all, continues to exist, as they are always wistfully aware. The émigrés who left Russia after the Revolution took up, from necessity, another, healthier life, without thinking, and assumed new languages. America has been the most fruitful soil for exiles of all nationalities. America has no time for foreigners as such, being too preoccupied with its own tumultuous present, and being aggressively monoglot. If you are there, you are expected to contribute; you cannot just hang about, as you can in the more wistful cities of Europe. In America, you can join, or leave.

TOURISTS are to foreigners as occasional tipplers are to alcoholics—they take strangeness and alienation in small, exciting doses, and besides, they are well-fortified against loneliness. Moreover, the places they go to expect and welcome them, put themselves out for their diversion. Boredom is the only hazard—it takes a healthy curiosity to keep tourists from rushing home in tears, from sighing with relief at the reappearance of familiarity. The principal difference between tourists and foreigners is that tourists have a home to go to, and a date of departure. I wonder how many of them would confess to having found the pinnacle of pleasure from a trip in the moment of returning home?

HOW APPROPRIATE tourists are, in certain places, at certain seasons! They set off spas, harbours, and watering-places as pigeons set off cathedrals; they exude an appetite for pleasure and diversion. And often, they bring the best out of the places they visit; women who know they are going to be seen take more trouble with their appearance. The only thing that besets them is that they have to invent reasons for visiting the places they visit, or else suffer from their own pointlessness. And the sun, they discover, is not quite sufficient reason for being anywhere.

A FOREIGNER has a curious perspective on the country he alights in. His foreignness more or less absolves him from being attached to any particular class—his accent puts the natives at rest. It is easier for him to avoid local attitudes and prejudices. He looks at the whole, first, as a game, and then, should he be serious, as an entire human situation. If he cares about it, he develops a calm and attentive eye, a taste for local food, and a passionate dispassion.

"Ah, but, being a foreigner, you cannot possibly know what it is like for us. You cannot suffer." But unless one wants to submerge, to become more English than the English, more German than the Germans, one does know what it is like; and one does suffer. The expatriate settles in a country for peripheral reasons; his involvement is with back home. The foreigner's involvement is with where he is. He has no other home. There is no secret landscape claiming him, no roots tugging at him. He is, if you like, properly lost, and so in a position to re-discover the world, from the outside in.

To be lost, it is not necessary to inhabit a wilderness, nor even to cry.

BELONGING. I am not sure what it means, for I think I always resisted it (I still have a crawling terror of being caught in a community sing-song). As for families, they are serviceable social units for a certain time only. With luck, the relationships within them will turn into quite ordinary human ones; otherwise they will wither away. If I belonged to anything, it was to the small, but then enormous, landscapes of my childhood, to houses, trees, gardens, walks—only then was my absorption so utter that I felt no separation between myself and an outside world. Childhood landscapes are an entire containment of mystery—we spend a good part of our lives trying to find them again, trying to lose ourselves in the sense in which children are lost. We come away with no more than occasional glimpses, whiffs, suggestions, and yet these are enough, often, to transform suddenly the whole current of our lives. A smell recalls a whole vanished state of being; the sound of a word reaches, far back, beyond memory. The beginning of poetry for me was the dazzling realisation of all that seemed to be magically compressed into the word "weather."

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THE SENSE OF ODDNESS, of surprise, of amazement. Occupying places, contexts, languages, we grow used to them. Habit sets in, and they cease to astonish us. In a foreign country, this does not happen, for nothing is exactly recognisable; it has not been with us from our beginnings. The architecture is odd, the shops unexpected; the faces provoke curiosity rather than recognition. And the money—the only real money is the money one knows as a child, for one feels strongly about what it should be worth. Other currencies are play-money, coupons; as such, one uses them in a more human, less excruciating way. In a foreign country, the pattern of days is less predictable—each one has its character, and is easier to remember. So, too, the weather; and so, too, the shape and feel of newspapers, the sound of bells, the taste of beer and bread. It is all rather like waking up and not knowing who or where one is. If, instead of simple recognition, one can go through a proper *realisation*, then quite ordinary things take on an edge; one keeps discovering oneself miraculously alive. So, the strangeness of a place propels one into life. The foreigner cannot afford to take anything for granted.

In a time like this, it becomes more and more difficult to be lost. It is astonishing into what stark, deserted crevices of the world Coca Cola signs have found their way. But because we have all begun to look, dress, and smell alike, it is still too easy to assume that we are.

LANGUAGE. To alight in a country without knowing a word of the language is a worthwhile lesson. One is reduced, whatever identity or distinction one has achieved elsewhere, to the level of a near-idiot, trying to conjure up a bed in sign-language. Instead of eavesdropping drowsily, one is forced to look at the eyes, the gestures, the intent behind the words. One is forced back to a watchful silence.

Learning a foreign language is a process of slowly divesting oneself of scaffolding. In the end, something stands up by itself and, if it is lucky, walks away. We lean out desperately to hear how we sound but, alas, we will never know. Not to be able to put oneself into words is the most searing of frustrations; behind the pittering phrases, a huge figure is gesticulating violently. We are suddenly reduced to what we are able to say. And even when we have mastered a language sufficiently well, it keeps trapping us, refusing to allow us to finish a train of thought by deserting us suddenly, making fun of us by coming out wrong. The language we grow up with is our servant; we are always a step ahead of it. A new language, however, already exists; we have to get a hold of it by the tail, and are never wholly sure where it will take us.

TO SPEAK TWO OR THREE languages is to have two or three totally different selves, like odd suits of clothing. Some fit more easily than others—it is rare to find an American or an Englishman who will speak three languages equally well. As Auden says, "Like all lovers, we are prejudiced; one may love French, or Italian, or Spanish, but one cannot love all three equally." Even so, I am still aware of having, in Spanish (the language I happen to love), an entirely different personality from my English-speaking one—nor is it simply me-in-translation. I realise this more acutely when I listen to a Spanish friend speaking English. He changes before my ears, and I think, How can I possibly sound to him? "If you knew me in English," I say—but, of course, it is impossible. Language, if we care about using it well, rather than efficiently, forever separates us. I have often listened to simultaneous translation between two languages I know well. The meaning? Oh yes, the meaning is there; but it is just *not the same experience*.

MOVING BETWEEN several languages, however, only dramatises what happens all the time within our own language: whatever our accent, we do not speak in the same voice to a baby, to a clergyman, to an old friend, to a foreigner. The feeling, the wave-lengths, act on our voices, and change them. Joyce once remarked, in passing: "Isn't it contradictory to make two men speak Chinese and Japanese respectively in a pub in Phoenix Park, Dublin? Nevertheless, that is a logical and objective method of expressing a deep conflict, an irreducible antagonism." If voices are anything to go by, then the idea of having a fixed, firm self is wildly illusory. We expect those with whom we are in sympathy to listen to what is behind our voice; it is horrifying to have someone listen to nothing more than what we say.

WHAT, REALLY, does it mean to speak in one's own voice? Is there such a voice? Possibly, but I doubt whether it would ever coincide with any of the voices or accents we use, either in public or in private. Nor is it the odd, anonymous

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voice we hear reading poems to us as we sit silently and attentively in front of them. It is something between a movement of the mind and a way with words, a current, an undertow, slightly beneath the surface of our saying. Nobody's voice, but one's own.

For a writer, it is an invaluable holiday for him to speak, in the course of the day, a language other than the one he writes in. When he comes to use his own language, it seems washed and clean. Karl Kraus writes, "My language is the universal whore whom I have to make into a virgin." For the foreigner, however, his own language remains steadily virginal.

Children who are bi-lingual have no difficulty distinguishing between their languages—they associate them with people, and switch quite simply, according to who speaks what. The main problem for people who are genuinely bi- or tri-lingual occurs when they come to write in any one of their languages; they are too used to language as a mechanism by then. Unless they have felt language as mystery (as children do when they repeat a word like "boomerang" endlessly, out of delight), they will never be able to convey a like mystery, and stay stranded in volubility.

IDEALLY, we may arrive at a point of civilisation where everybody speaks his own language, and understands everybody else's. Unfortunately, although this can occasionally happen, it feels unnatural. A nuance, a figure of speech, can only provoke another in the same language. The most untidy conversations are those in which too many people know too many languages; they inevitably get out of control. The English are rigorously unsympathetic to foreigners, being excessively proud of their own language. I will never forget a small, lavender-clad English lady, standing over her frail collection of luggage at Barcelona airport, waving her scrawny umbrella in the faces of a voluble host of Spanish officials, and snorting, "I don't speak your beastly language!"

Why should we take such an odd pride in being taken for a different nationality than our own? Perhaps because we have succeeded in getting away with an impersonation, in shedding our distinguishing marks. Why should that matter? Anonymity is peculiarly appealing to a foreigner; he is always trying to live in a nowhere, in the complex of his present. To be fastened suddenly to his past may discommode him. Languages are defiant connections to different worlds; as such, they become pressingly important. Still, there is an age after which one can no longer learn new languages, after which the self cannot be extended without danger. New languages can be disappearances, rather than appearances.

"WHO ARE YOU?" strangers ask, in all innocence, unaware of the enormity of the question. What they are really saying is "Give us a sign." In America, one defines oneself by occupation—"I work for X." In England, one invokes a family. The answers are, however, all deceptions, Nothing would discomfit the questioner more than to have his question taken seriously. Besides, the question really counts only when we ask it of ourselves. Here, to answer "I am a foreigner" in three languages is quite sufficient.

To marry across a difference of language is no more dire than to marry across a difference of temperament; but it can certainly add to the complexities. Explanations are rendered impossible. "Ah, but you don't understand" can become very literal.

THE LINEAMENTS of travel. To travel far and often tends to make us experts in anonymity—but never quite, for we always carry too much, prepare for too many eventualities. One bag could have been left behind. We are too afraid of unknowns to ignore them.

Airports are the great nowheres of this world; we have made them so. Just as plane trips, be they across oceans or countries, leave nothing to remember but a drone of passing time, so the points of arrival and departure are made to look alike, as indistinct as possible. Airport restaurants should serve nothing but manna, not tasty but sustaining. The only thing plane trips do for the soul is to make it think twice about what it can take with it. Fundamentally, they deceive us by allowing us to travel without a sense of movement.

Sea voyages are meat and drink to foreigners, a mixture of delight and despair, a kind of prelude to dying. The prevailing atmosphere is not exactly one of boredom, but of a limbo almost indistinguishable from it. Every ship has its ministering angels, its characters, its messengers of doom—a row of nuns painted to a bench, a woman with performing dogs, a man who can do tricks with toothpicks. Aboard ship, people are removed from either the contexts they have left or the ones they are going to assume; and this affects them in various ways. For some, it is

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a relief; for others, a deprivation. Some are impelled to tell the story of their lives, because all at once they have no life, and must create the illusion of what they have left and what is to come. Others wander endlessly along the polished corridors, through the Bamboo Room, the Aquarium Room, listening to the tock of ping-pong, lost. During a sea voyage, a small, artificial community is created, with the intimacy of desperation. One leaves a ship with a flurry of burning addresses which, five minutes after landing, have already turned to ashes. I once heard of a man who spent an entire Atlantic crossing in the bar, playing chess with himself. It made me unaccountably sad.

TRAINS are for meditation, for playing out long thought-processes, over and over; we trust them, perhaps because they have no choice but to go where they are going. Nowadays, however, they smack of a dying gentility. To travel by car makes journeys less mysterious, too much a matter of the will. One might as easily sit on a sofa and imagine a passing landscape. I doubt whether any truly absorbing conversation ever took place in a car; they are good only for word games and long, tedious narratives. We have come to regard cars too much as appendages of our bodies, and will probably pay for it in the end by losing the use of our legs. We owe to them the cluttering of the landscape, the break-up of villages and towns.

Frontiers fascinate us, for, crossing them, we expect to be metamorphosed, and no longer are. Even although the language changes, the landscape does not.

NOSTALGIA: leafing through an old passport on a winter evening, trying to remember what we did from stamp to stamp. M. can remember vividly meals we ate in odd places years ago, beds we slept in, conversations we had. I cannot—my memory is sharper for states of mind, atmospheres, weather. It is sad to part with a passport—one has been through so much in its company.

It is not exactly loneliness that afflicts the foreigner, but more that his oddness and experience keep part of him forever separate from every encounter, every gathering, every conversation. Unless he can bear this and see it as something fruitful, however, then he becomes simply lost, an exile without even a country of origin.

"Que signifie ce réveil soudain—dans cette chambre obscure—avec les bruits d'une ville tout d'un coup étrangère? Et tout m'est étranger, tout, sans un etre à moi, sans un lieu où refermer cette plaie. Que fais-je, à quoi riment ces gestes, ces sourires? Je ne suis pas d'ici—pas d'ailleurs non plus. Et le monde n'est plus qu'un paysage inconnu où mon cœur ne trouve plus d'appuis. Etranger, qui peut savoir ce que ce mot veut dire." Camus, in his Notebooks.

CAFÉS IN EUROPE. The no-man's-lands where people come to take refuge from time and from their outside selves, where waiters blink at anything and understand everything, where people watch one another silently, across all boundaries and frontiers, from behind newspapers with indecipherable headlines. A café is a stage set for an Absolute Nowhere, a pure parenthesis in the swim of time. It provides somewhere for the body to be while the mind wanders; and it also provides an infinity of small dramas, a strange polyglot intermingling of wishes and wavelengths. There, everybody is, atmospherically, a foreigner. And to be a foreigner is not, after all, a question of domicile, but of temperament.

WE HAVE weathered so many journeys, and so many shapes of love. Would it have been the same, we ask one another, had we stayed still, in the mill with the water running under us? There is no way of knowing.

WHAT HAUNTS a foreigner is the thought of always having to move on, of finding, in the places where he comes to rest, the ghosts he thought were left behind; or else of losing the sharp edge, the wry, surprised eye that keeps him extra-conscious of things. Even at his most assured, he tends to keep a bag packed, in case. The feeling of being lost, however, is never so terrifying when it is compared with the feeling of being found and dried. It is the state of falling in love with a woman one does not quite know yet; and will never quite know.

FOREIGNERS ARE, if you like, curable romantics. The illusion they retain, perhaps left over from their mysterious childhood epiphanies, is that there might somewhere be a place—and a self—instantly recognisable, into which they will be able to sink with a single, timeless, contented sigh. In the curious region *between* that illusion and the faint terror of being utterly nowhere and anonymous, foreigners live. From there, if they are lucky, they smuggle back occasional undaunted notes, like messages in a bottle, or glimmers from the other side of the mirror.

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MUSIC

Stravinsky's Return

A Russian Diary — By ROBERT CRAFT

September 21

PARIS-Moscow, in a Soviet TU-104. Vodka and *zakousky*—sprats, herring, caviar—served by hostesses who have not been to charm school and have no camera smiles. Nearing Moscow we fly low over forests turning yellow, meadows still green, lakes, boat-busy rivers and canals: an unexpectedly rich and tidy landscape to one who has imagined something muddy and sprawling—the Russia I.S. characterises as a combination of *"caviare et merde."* I.S., straining to see, is excited and open-mouthed, and V. is choked with emotion; fifteen months of uncertainty have come to an end. Aground, we taxi past airplanes from Poland, Bulgaria, and China, unseen in our world. A reception committee pushes to the door, and I.S. emerges, bowing deeply—a gesture out of another era, as his dark glasses are glaringly symbolic of another kind of life (Hollywood, I regret to say). We move toward television lights blinded, like moths.

Familiar faces among those helping us to a waiting room: Tikhon Khrennikov and Kara Karayev. And familiar-by-resemblance: a woman with the slant eyes Picasso saw in I.S., singing to me in a high voice *"Je suis la nièce de Monsieur Stravinsky."* Another, short and stout woman whom I mistake for Jacob Epstein, says *"Ich bin Yudina,"* and plants a wet kiss. Someone else hands me a birch bark basket containing moss, a twig, a blade of wheat, an acorn, a leaf, telling me (in English) she is the daughter of the poet Konstantin Balmont. Inside the terminal we shake scores of hands and hear *"dobro pozhalovat,"* over and over, from large, round, smiling faces. Most of those present have waited a seesawing year for this moment, and some have hoped or feared a far longer time still; to Yudina, for example, it must fulfil a lifelong dream. That is why the atmosphere is like a child's birthday party, why everyone, and not least the I.S.'s, is bursting with relief. A neat, bright-eyed young woman introduces herself as my interpreter, Alexandra Alexandrovna, and we pack into a limousine.

A DIVIDED TURNPIKE, through birch and pine woods. A cold pink sunset with an Edvard Munch feeling. Less than U.S., but more than anticipated, traffic—a statement that suddenly makes me aware of my cold war "conditioning." Moscow lights up as we enter, and V. vainly studies the miles of new apartment buildings on Leningrad Prospect for landmarks. At the National Hotel, the airport committee, only slightly diminished, awaits us again, but this time their welcoming is sealed in vodka and sweet champagne. The event of Russian musical history, some say, and others tell me, privately, that they are still rubbing their eyes, never having believed that it would happen. When I.S. reads a telegram from Shostakovich, national sentiment flows with the national champagne, and gets even thicker.

We escape to the restaurant with Xenia Yurievna, the new-found niece. Thirty thousand people have queued for I.S.'s Leningrad concerts, she tells me, and so earnestly that I fear she may have arrived at this tally by her own footwork. Perhaps the restaurant has ambitions as a nightclub—mouldy jazz-type noises are coming from a far corner—and that might explain why single men are relegated to a smaller, adjoining room. The waitresses are blonde, uncorsetted, and unhurrying, and the customers—Indians in saris amongst them, a party of Italians very happy to find *espresso* on the menu, and Chinese who are the "best dressed" people in the room—seem to have all the time in the world. But except for the portrait of

ROBERT CRAFT, *American conductor, accompanied Igor Stravinsky and his wife on their return to Russia last autumn. He is the author of "Conversations with Stravinsky" (recently re-issued as a Penguin), "Memories and Commentaries," and "Expositions and Developments."*

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Lenin on the wall and the absence of neckties on the men, the restaurant is not unlike many in non-midtown Manhattan. The Chinese are "conditioned," too, as much as we are, V. says, a conclusion she reaches after watching them cut their food into tiny pieces.

THE HOTEL LOBBY is the place of embarkation for a pair of dilapidated elevators and a staircase whose caryatids appear to be holding up the second floor. (Nothing appears to be holding the drapery over the caryatids' private parts, however, and for this reason they look as though about to drop the second floor.) At the front desk we receive folders of the "Lenin-Stalin Mausoleum" on which an unsuccessful attempt has been made to cancel the name of Stalin (it is still distinctly legible). At the second floor desk we receive our room keys from a governess in a white *kokoshnik*, like the nurses in *Petroushka*. Cuspidors are found in the corridors at convenient distances, and tonight, because of the strong smell of fish glue, they could conceivably be required for serious service. The I.S.s' suite, which the Prime Minister of Singapore has vacated minutes before, could be called the Napoleon Room. The ceiling fresco is a "Lancret" (peacock and naked *femme fatale*), the draperies are Empire-style crushed velvet, the furniture includes chairs with fasces-shaped arm rests, and the "Sèvres," on a pedestal in the corner, is adorned with imperial gold eagles and a likeness of the Corsican himself. Incongruously non-imperial are the modern five-pronged lamps, and the portrait of a heroic dog. From tomorrow, our meals will be served in this medium-sized ballroom, Alexandra says, and waiters and maids come to take dispositions for breakfast (caviar and coffee). These people are as curious to be talking to I.S.—returning "White Russian" celebrities must be rare—as I.S. is to them. We learn that they work and rest in twenty-four hour shifts, which is probably not ideal for efficiency but which they claim to prefer. One girl says she is to leave for her vacation in a few days, and she begs V. for a bit of rouge. I walk, before bed, in Red Square. A few trucks, a few pedestrians. The red stars on the Kremlin towers burn like beacons in the crystal night.

September 22

REHEARSE the Moscow National Orchestra in glossy Tchaikovsky Hall, a warmly resonant room that is also a portrait gallery of composers. The conductor Ivanov—yellow hair and the face of a good woodsman in a Russian fairy tale—introduces I.S. to the orchestra. They receive him with applause and bow-tapping, but the greeting seems to me a little quiet and cool. I confide this impression to Alexandra, whose answer is that "Artists are not glamorised here as they are in America where, for example, Ulanova's *claques* embarrass the Bolshoi Ballet. We have no personality cult here." Not since Stalin, anyway, one wants to say, and to protest that I.S. and Ulanova are incomparable cases. But, in fact, I like this refreshing democratism, and the absence of that detestable "Herr-Professor-General-Intendent" protocol; and I like seeing my name on the *affiches*, when I recognise it, in the same type as everyone else's instead of in the usual pica otherwise reserved for piano-tuners.

A good ensemble, quick to adopt our alien demands of phrasing and articulation, and harder-working than European orchestras generally. And *Le Sacre*, played with an emotion I can describe only as un-Teutonic, is a different piece. The sound does not glitter as it does with an American orchestra, and it is less loud, though still deafening in this small and live room. The musicians prefer the lyric dances to the rhythmic ones, I think, but even in the broadest *cantabile* they do not chew into the visceral fat. This is very agreeable to I.S., and so is the general sobriety; the violinists do not weave with passion as Russian violinists are wont to do abroad. In fact, our only significant criticisms are that no one is attentive to tuning —I think they consider our concern with it exaggerated—and that the harp is thick, honeyed, and weak in volume: two players share the part in *Orpheus*, but it is less penetrating than ever before. The bass drum is another, but satisfying, oddity. It is open on one side —sawn in two, in fact. The *secco* articulation from the single head makes the beginning of the *Danse de la terre* sound like a stampede. I.S. thinks the bassoon timbre different, too. "The *fagotti* at the end of the *Evocation des Ancêtres* sound, for the first time, like the *cinq vieillards* I had imagined." But the music is in every respect radically unlike that of the familiar fuse-blowing piece of orchestral exhibitionism.

A RECEPTION at the Composers' Union, with Khrennikov, Shaporin, Dankovich, Kabalevsky. Then a tour, beginning with turbaned St. Basil's and the Kremlin. Alexandra and Karen Khatchaturian (our escort from the Composers' Union) use pre-1917 names that I.S. is likely to recognise, and we go about being told, anachronistically, that the green building on the left is "the Hall of the Nobles," and the rose-coloured building on the right "the English Club, which you know from *War and Peace*." The common colours of the old city are pastels

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of peach and pink, contrasted with strong blues, ochres, and greens. These are the colours of the low, flat nineteenth-century houses with double-windows and circular archways that are found helter-skelter by mammoth grey apartment and office buildings. At Sparrow Hills, on the south bank of the Moscow River, the site of Napoleon's first view of the city, we leave the car for a walk. A russet and gold afternoon, with a gauze of blue smoke over the city. The I.S.'s are silent and, I think more moved than I have ever seen them.

And they are even more so back across the river at the Novodevichy Monastery (which means "New Maidens'" and which seems a redundant title unless the place was intended for repentant fallen women, "new maidens in heart"). This excursion, at V.'s insistence, is, I think, against the wishes, unexpressed, of Alexandra and Karen. The Novodevichy, decaying behind ancient walls, is an island of the old Russia. Crosses, graves, and statues of angels are in the gardens, and old women in black kerchiefs, tattered coats and shoes, are everywhere kneeling and praying before them. We enter a church in which a priest in a white cassock is officiating before an elderly congregation. A few of the most fervent lie in the prostrate kow-tow position I.S. sometimes used to assume at his own devotions in the little Russian Church in Hollywood.

This unexpected look behind the door has driven a wedge, however slight and transparent, between I.S. and his escorts, though the visit was in no outward sense opposed by them, and perhaps we are mistaken even in having felt their silent resistance. (In any case, I have felt it more than I.S., but then, twenty-four hours in the Soviet Union have helped me to realise that my, and my generation's, disease of self-consciousness is infinitely further advanced than theirs.) Inside the church, nevertheless, we are all three aware of a discomfort to them that is due not, I think, to the numbers of people there but to the too obvious fact of their poverty. And the conversation in the car, later, is inhibited. Karen talks about "the New Soviet Life," the free education, the free medical care and free medicine, the free utilities, the nine-rubles-a-month rent, the wonders of the Metro, and of the street automats where a kopeck in a slot may procure everything from a sandwich to a spray of perfume. Alexandra, taking another tack, uses the Novodevichy as an example of religious toleration. She talks of religion as the relic of an older generation—"Why, even my own mother knows a priest"—that will die a natural death soon and is therefore of no consequence. But the I.S.'s are disturbed not for any religious or political reason, but simply because the Novodevichy is the Russia they knew and the Russia that is a part of them.

To-night, exchanging impressions with I.S.—this is the first time we have been alone long enough to do so—I am conscious of a desire to push into black or white, no matter the cost in exaggeration. And I am aware of a need, for the first time in fifteen years with the I.S.'s, to feel some co-ordination between my impressions and theirs, or confirmation that our experience has been in some measure the same. The I.S.'s complain that the foreign picture of the Soviet Union is absurdly misleading, even concerning such uncomplicated questions as the condition of consumer goods; V. has come with trinkets, rather as Peter Stuyvesant came to the Indians, except that she is now ashamed to give, and is even embarrassed to dispose of them. And the I.S.'s are indignant at having suffered so many months of anxiety, and they are ashamed, I think, of their suspicions, as recently as yesterday, about being "taken in by flowers and flattery." And Moscow is not "grim," and the people do not appear more "oppressed," or indeed, "happier" or "unhappier," than they do elsewhere. And though, admittedly, "unhappiness" and pride go well together, pride here is of an altogether different order. The I.S.'s profess themselves astounded by "the absence of *nichivo*-ism and of servility," and V. has come back from the Post Office saying that "servility has been replaced by civility." The man who drives our limousine is not a "chauffeur," the girl who cleans the room is not a "maid," the woman who checks our coats is not an "attendant," the boy who operates the elevator is not the "lift boy." (What they *are* I do not know, but *"Tovarich"* is still the most common greeting.) All of this is only an indication of the overwhelming "pro" judgment of all three of us at the end of one day. But do the I.S.'s share my feeling that in spite of all the similarities slightly transposed (and of the knowledge that Paris is only a long lunch-time away), and in spite of admirations and sympathies aroused by everything we see, the sensation remains that intellectually speaking we are on a different (not a better or worse) planet? The answer is "no". They are at home. The schizophrenic U.S./U.S.S.R. situation does not bother them at all, and forty-eight years abroad have not brainwashed them in the least. Their abiding emotion is an intense pride of everything Russian. (How wise of Immigration Departments, though unjust, to put the question of birthplace first and citizenship second.) Forty-eight hours ago, in Paris, I would have denied with full conviction, that I.S. (and to a slightly lesser extent, V.) could ever be at home here again,

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not in the political Soviet Union, of course (though that could be arranged), but in "Russia." Yet even a half century of expatriotism can be forgotten in a night.

September 23

PASSERS-BY in front of the Conservatory at 9 a.m.: women in boots and kerchiefs, men in leather jackets, some with berets and some with Lenin beards (nobody looks like Marx or Castro).

Solid improvements in the orchestra this morning, especially towards rhythmic steadiness in the strings. Further transformations in I.S., too. V., at breakfast, claims, as part of the reason, that without money and taxes as possible subjects of conversation, sixty per cent of his talk is freed for other topics. But another reason is that I.S. has always been a different person speaking his own language, and now, exchanging talk with the musicians, he is more buoyant than I have ever seen him. This, too, is the first time in his life that he has worked with a Russian-speaking orchestra. (Incidentally, the fact that no one speaks a word of any language but Russian makes us feel the decades of isolation more strongly than anything else, orchestras being so polyglot usually.) The musicians call him *Igor Feodorovich*, and the family feeling common to any group of Russians is soon established. To the eye, I.S. remains outside the family only by virtue of his elegant manners—that courtly bow from the door of the airplane.

Returning to the hotel we find V. tearful. Her cousin Volodya has come with a packet of family photographs, and an account of her mother's death during the war, which is the first news of any kind concerning her mother in thirty years. This is the moment V. has dreaded ever since the trip became a possibility, though she has sought it, too. Earlier in the morning she has searched for the residence of her first marriage, and though the street was found with no building destroyed or changed, she has failed to recognise the house. This has been almost as disturbing.

Boris at the Bolshoi. *Ancien régime* plush and gilt, and a glittering chandelier. We sit in the first box over the orchestra pit, half-shrouded by red canopy. The conductor receives only the faintest greeting on his entrance. This, Alexandra explains, is because "he hasn't done anything yet," though even when he has, and the other performers too, the audience reaction seems to us remarkably restrained. But the visual attributes are consistently superior to the musical. The sets could be *tableaux vivants* in the Kremlin Museum, and actors more richly robed would be difficult to imagine. I.S., who has not heard the music in thirty years, is both moved and—by Rimsky-Korsakov—annoyed. "Moussorgsky accompanied Pimen, by a single bassoon, but Rimsky, to make certain everyone saw the point, added other instruments, with the result that an original idea is reduced to a commonplace. Still, I object less to the fact that Rimsky deformed Moussorgsky than to the fact that he tried to export him." I.S. thinks that "the music of the Coronation Scene must have inspired the Emperor's death march in *The Nightingale*," that "Moussorgsky's Fool supplied Berg with a model for the same role in *Wozzeck*," and that the Czarina's unaccompanied song at the beginning of Act II was almost literally copied by Debussy in Mélisande's *'mes longues cheveux.'* But I.S. likes the Polish scene above all, "the revelry which, alas, musically speaking, turns to marmalade at the end." During the intermission following this scene, I.S. is feeling extraordinarily compassionate about the Poles: "What a history! But, of course, if you pitch your tent in the middle of Fifth Avenue it is quite likely you will be run over by a bus."

ANOTHER LATE-NIGHT séance, the I.S.'s again complaining of the misinformation of other visitors, and conveniently forgetting that nobody else has enjoyed a red (no pun) carpet tour like theirs. But by now I.S.'s *volte face* has reached a point where he is currently appearing in the role of defender of the faith (Lenin's). His "defence of Russia," too, is virtually complete. "What a beautiful factory. *Chudno* apartment house." Heads roll when dinner in Hollywood is five minutes late, but a two-hour delay here is commended as "very good service"; which, indeed, it is, compared to some of the even longer waits. (But perhaps this change is due also to the resumption of that Russian time-scale according to which visitors arrive for tea and talk until midnight.) And when the dinner finally does appear, he will make statements like "What marvellous salt!" and not mention that the *pièce de résistance* would effectively resist an electric saw—and not want me to mention it either. In fact, if to-night's meal had been served to him in France, de Gaulle himself would have received a telegram about the decline of civilisation, but here it was *vkussno* ("very tasty"), a judgment not based on an attempt to eat it, I should add.

Ralph Parker, Hurok's representative, to whom I confide some of this transformation, asks me whether I am now seeing "the true" I.S. Well, all I.S.'s are "true" enough, but the picture of him *has* been given background, and

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the background does wash out a great deal of what, heretofore, I had supposed to be "traits of character," or personal idiosyncrasy. And perhaps I can now see the Soviet point of view of I.S.'s expatriate years as a pillar-to-post course from circus ballet to Hebrew canticle to Roman Catholic Mass, a point of view blind to the value question of how perfectly fluted I.S.'s pillars are, and with what exquisite capitals he has adorned the posts. But, for a time, anyway, I will try to listen to his music from their perspective, and *sub specie patris*.[1]

V. says that I.S. is slipping into diminutives, a thing he affects to scorn in other Russians abroad—and she adds that diminutive forms are not more endemic than they were fifty years ago, contrary to foreign information. To-night, for example, he has asked the waiter for a spoon-*chik*, which V. considers a *"petit-bourgeois* solecism of a very revealing kind," even though she has always held that I.S. is a pure 100 per cent Russian whose "international sophistication" was invented by, and is an imitation of, Diaghilev. I.S. has begun to call his niece Xenia, "Xeniotchka," and this seems remarkably inapposite. Though Xenia is a good-hearted and courageous woman, she often appears to regard her uncle as something a new Soviet invention has retrieved from the moon.

September 24

AN INTERVIEW with I.S. in this morning's *Pravda* concludes with what he says is a spurious (but what sounds to me like a true) quotation: "I salute the noble Soviet Union." Ralph Parker telephones advising us to ignore it. A stock phrase, he says, that is tacked on to every interview. But the difficulty in I.S.'s case is that he has annoyed the Western press by receiving *Pravda* and refusing them. When they call, asking for his denial of the statement, they are well aware that he cannot give it without insulting his Russian hosts. Parker succeeds in pacifying the principal reporters, after a time, with the argument that I.S. is not a U.S. cultural exchange artist but a guest of the Soviet Government. (The "U.S.A." appears only after my name on the programmes and placards, but *could* it have been put after I.S.'s name?) I.S.'s confidence is a litle undermined by this, as he calls it, breach of faith, and though he does not mention the matter to Alexandra and Karen, when they appear, everyone behaves sheepishly.

SEVERAL SURPRISE VISITORS at the rehearsal today, such as our friend Carlos Prieto from Mexico; and Lily Brik, Mayakovsky's *amour*, whom V. saw last in Petrograd just before the Revolution. And Lina Prokofiev, not encountered since 1938 in Paris; the I.S.'s are startled to see her, in fact, because Parisian Russians have advised them that even to inquire about her could do her harm: in Stalin's time she was sent to Siberia for eight years, supposedly for consorting too much with Anglo-Americans in the Embassies. She is accompanied by her son, Sviatoslav, a gangling, slightly grosser image of the composer.

At this rehearsal, the conductor Rozhdestvensky gives I.S. a cover of the second volume of Debussy's Preludes on which, after the printed words *"pour piano,"* Debussy has written, *"et pour amuser mon ami* IGOR STRAVINSKY, *juin* 1913." Rozhdestvensky says he bought the page for a few kopecks in a Moscow book-stall. It leads me to make inquiries concerning I.S.'s house in Ustilug (it must have come from there), but no one has even heard of Ustilug, and all Xenia Yurievna knows is that in 1914 I.S.'s Beliankin cousins moved his possessions from Ustilug to a warehouse in Poltava. Xenia does have a photograph of the Ustilug house with her, though, and of the *shtetl*, the Jewish village, but as I.S. feels more strongly about this happy home than about his largely unhappy childhood one in St. Petersburg, he does not want to look at it, and Ustilug is a subject he will not discuss. The Debussy autograph probably indicates that his possessions there, manuscripts, paintings, books, were sold or distributed after the Revolution.

IN THE Kremlin Museum (Palace of Arms) this afternoon, we find ourselves looking less intently at the exhibits than at the other visitors: Tartars, Mongolians, Chinese, Red Army soldiers, kerchiefed Russian women, Uzbeks in black and white hexagonal caps. In felt overshoes and in tow of female lecturers, they glide clumsily over the polished wood floors, like tiros on a skating rink. A museum of the Church, first of all, it is rich in crosses, Bibles, and clerical garments, all lustrously jewelled: a surplice brocaded with 150,000 pearls; a Bible encrusted with a tutti frutti of rubies, diamonds, emeralds; another Bible set with tear-shaped amethysts. The Imperial jewels—in orb and sceptre, in throne seats, in fur-trimmed crowns and ermine-lined robes—are not less rich, of course, and the Czars' horse equipages (saddles,

[1] I have, and have discovered Russianisms even in *Pulcinella*; the D-minor tenor aria, for example, which is a Russian dance, and the horn countermelody at number 65 in the soprano aria, which is closer to Tchaikovsky than to Pergolesi. The Symphony in C seems to me now as nostalgically "Russian", in its way, as *Les Noces*.

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bridles, stirrups, whip handles) are the most extravagantly jewelled objects of all: for example, a horse's bit with a topaz stud the size of a bird's egg. One of the horse blankets, the gift of a Shah, is made of the feathers of five hundred yellow parrots.

Lermontov's *Masquerade* at the Maly Theatre is well acted and so lavishly decorated that the stage picture could be a collective dream wish of upper-class elegance. (Incidentally, the I.S.'s have been told abroad of a shortage of convincing "aristocratic" accents and "refined" intonation, but they find no evidence of that lack to-night.) The production seems to follow the old Meyerhold staging, and its fast pace depends upon ingenious uses of the revolving stage. The long evening is cleverly relieved, if not shortened, by incidental dancing to a well-chosen potpourri of Prokofiev. But what a curious play! The first two acts are hardly less powerful, in some ways, than the *Othello* to which the plot contains a not overstrained parallel, but the third act falls into bathos. Instead of a dramatic solution, the author pops an "evil genius" out of the bag, and the "tragedy" is laid to a long-forgotten vengeance-seeker of long ago.

Line for line, for four-and-a-half hours, resourceful translation of this difficult verse-play has been piped into my ear by Alexandra, and hers is the most amazing performance of the evening. (She apologises to our neighbours in advance, but no one gives us even a glance of annoyance.) During intermissions we drink tea with the scene painter and stage director—and talk theatre with Alexandra. It is her passion, and play translations are her largest source of income. She asks me for new American plays to translate, but the prescription is that they should be "something like Wesker."

September 25

AN OFFICIAL CALL on Ekaterina Furtseva the Minister of Culture, an attractive blonde—gossip calls her Catherine the Third—with abundant *charme slav*. She talks to us about the future, giving poetical recitations of production statistics, and descriptions of new orchestras, new ballets, new schools in Tashkent or Siberia, which she graciously invites us to visit.

The policeman at the Lenin Mausoleum allows us to jump the queue, a caterpillar of booted and bundled, capped and kerchiefed people winding around the north corner of the Kremlin. (Some feelings of guilt about doing so, but we couldn't have waited six hours, and those who have waited seem so long-suffering.) We descend a staircase in double file, and in silence. In front of us are turbaned heads from the south-east, fur-covered heads from the far north, red faces, dark faces, yellow faces, square faces, slant-eyed faces. Soldiers keep the traffic moving in the marble corridors, and a soldier faces the glass catafalque from each end, standing, themselves, at near *rigor mortis*. The hair and brows of the small recumbent figure in the black suit are red and not black as in photographs, but surely the figure is a wax doll and no embalmed body. And, as surely, it makes no difference. Seeing is believing, and Mohammed's toe-nail, the splinter of the true cross, the "real" remains of Lenin, are all to the same purpose. I.S.: "The religion of Lenin is the opiate of the masses. . . ."

Orpheus, *Petroushka*, and the *Firebird* performed by the Leningrad Ballet in the Kremlin Theatre, a new auditorium with escalators, lounges, bars to accommodate six thousand, and with devices for radio-ed translations by every seat. We sit with pretty Natasha Khrennikov, and the English-speaking composer Kabalevsky who, though reputedly an oppositionist to I.S.'s visit, weeps at the end of the *Firebird*—though that, come to think of it, is not incompatible with anti-Stravinskyism. At times, both the music, and the staging are hardly recognisable, especially in *Petroushka* which is much less "Russian" to us than Fokine-Benois. The *Firebird* is the best performed and best received but, then, it is the prototype of the Soviet ballet in many respects including length, sentimentality, and, I regret to say, musical quality. Shortly before the lights are lowered for it, a part of the audience discovers and applauds I.S. A moment later, Khrushchev, accompanied by several members of his cabinet, enters the *loge* directly across the hall from ours, and the whole audience stands and applauds. When the *Firebird* begins—or seems to: the *tempo* is strange and the sound unbalanced—a shout of "*Viva* Khrushchev" comes from somewhere below. The cry is taken up by other voices, and an attempt is made to turn it into a rhythmic chant, but shushing noises are heard, too, and they soon have the majority. The demonstration is quelled only when the lights are turned up. "Cubans," says Alexandra, without much sympathy. "It happens all the time." At the end of the *Firebird*, Khrushchev stands to applaud, but he has vanished before the first curtain call.

September 26

KOLYA K. IS A POET (self-declared) aged twenty-six, who has haunted the hotel lobby for three days in hopes of interviewing I.S. He is offended when V. refers to his hero,

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Evtushenko, as "a tribune who might have been a poet in another time and place," but V. says the same of Mayakovsky and that is an even less popular verdict. Brecht is another Kolya idol, but Rilke is unknown to him even by name, and Edna Millay is his favourite contemporary English-language poet. The pantheon of painters is even more curious in that it contains no Renaissance masters at all, but only such "moderns" as Cézanne and Renoir, whom he feels obliged to defend as *avant-garde* causes. Confessing his inability to appreciate more recent art, he tells us about "a clump of barbed wire at an exhibition in Paris, that was called *Dream*. Now what has barbed wire to do with dreaming?" Talking about the arts during Stalinism, he says that the dictator is supposed to have commented on a book of poems by Simenov to his mistress to the effect that "there should be just two copies printed, one for him and one for her." On the new climate of "liberalism for the arts," Kolya's opinion is that "the only serious enemy is the foreign press. Many government officials want to support the so-called rebel poets, musicians, and painters, but as soon as they are published, performed, or shown, the foreign press pretends that they are defying the régime, which, for example, Evtushenko most patently is not."

TO-NIGHT'S CONCERT, in Tchaikovsky Hall, is the most moving in my life, and I think it is for I.S. too, though so far as I can tell the applause is more for the returning Russian prodigal than for the music. *Orpheus*, in any case, is attended with much reading of programme notes, and other signs of restlessness and boredom, and this is the same in every section of an audience that is at least as stratified as ours, with, as everywhere in the world, eager youth in the balcony and apathetic age *parterre*. As an encore, I.S. conducts his wind-band arrangement of the *Volga Boat Song*, but it diminishes the ovation somewhat, and dampens the mood, partly because the audience has waited in vain for the strings to play on the second time around, but also, I think, because it is a reference to the wrong Russia and the wrong past. The applause continues in rhythmic unison, however, until I.S. appears in his overcoat and tells the audience, "You see a very happy man." In the dressing-room, we receive gifts from the orchestra—for me a lacquered box with a "Firebird" on the cover.

September 27

A late-night interview at the Moscow television studios. Answering an inquiry about his next composition, I.S. lays an egg as large as Kastchei's, but not magical. At the words "I am writing a Biblical cantata, in Hebrew, for the Israeli government" faces fall, and the programme limps to an end. Parker tells us afterwards that the stony reaction was because Israel is regarded as succursal to the United States, but also because of the Soviet attitude to the Bible, and of the Russian composers' feeling that he should be writing in his own language, or, at least, in a language he knows. A newscast immediately before our appearance shows Khrushchev being cheered along the route of his tour, and the new United States Ambassador, Foy Kohler, being made to look as grim and friendless as Gromyko is in the U.S.

September 28

TO THE SCRIABIN MUSEUM, in Scriabin's old apartment in the Arbat district. Little can have altered since Scriabin's time, which is to say that Blavatsky is still a presence as well as the *clavière lumière*, now on exhibit as the number one relic. The caretakers are two old ladies madly in love with "Vanya Cleebourne." They introduce a young "electronic composer" who plays his "tape filter" for a film, *Cosmic Space*, the techniques for which are mysteriously purported to have been developed from Scriabin's ideas concerning the *clavière lumière*. We also hear a recording of Scriabin's "Black Mass" Sonata played by the late white hope of all the Soviet pianists, Safronitski.

Among sundry other visits, the Kamerny Theatre, where V. played in Beaumarchais' *Svadba* early in 1917; this is on the Nikitski Boulevard, the "bark" of the old city, on the analogy that Moscow grew in successive circles like a tree. And the Chekhov House, a red brick *fin de siècle* eyesore. And the Tolstoy House, which is in a neighbourhood of attractive lime-coloured buildings with white, arched window-frames. A tall dovecote stands at a nearby street corner.

OUR SECOND CONCERT. At intermission, I.S., pale and perspiring, complains of nausea, but refuses to see a doctor. I send Alexandra for one anyway, an elderly woman, as it happens, who tells me that I.S. "was a legend already in my childhood." She finds his pulse weak and refuses to sanction any more conducting, at which I.S., furious, drinks brandy and coffee, stalks on stage, and does rather better than at the first concert. The forty-minute intermission puts the foreign press on the trail, however, and newsmen perch outside our hotel rooms afterwards like carrion crows. The Soviet medics are dumbfounded at the extent of I.S.'s private pharmacy, and incredulous at the—true—story that he has swallowed ten drops of an opium paregoric

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before the concert, and washed it down with two tumblers of whisky.

September 29

MOST OF THE DAY is spent in answering cables about I.S.'s "stroke," and in denying press reports that he has had one. At night we go to the Obratzsov Puppet Theatre and see a parody of posh music, that is without a moment of *longueurs*. Child prodigies are mocked by an infant in a perambulator who howls for its bottle and babbles baby-talk, but then smashes into the Rachmaninov Second Concerto. The "dark" singing of gypsies is lampooned by a teenage girl with a bass-baritone bray. U.S. tap-dancing, Hope-Crosby type comedian singing, and "sexy"—"sex-appeala" the Russians call it—adolescent blues singing are all neatly spoofed, but our main interest in these burlesques is in seeing how U.S. physical characteristics are typed. The drollest of the American parodies is a take-off on television commercials, an elaborately developed choral "fugue" about vitamin pills "that keep you alive until you die." These gentle satires are well-timed and in good taste. But though they are not, I think, the highlight of the show, they receive the most vigorous applause—from an audience that must be at least half-foreign, judging by the switchboard of languages in the lobby. (The performance can be followed without knowledge of Russian, though the spectator must be able at least to recognise it, as in the skit with a French poodle who growls angrily when its mistress bids it *"Bonjour,"* but barks with pleasure when she says *"zdrastvuite."*) The highlight, for me, is a parody of beatnik poetry-readings. The reader has a huge mouth, terrible grammar, and atrocious manners: before beginning, he rudely clears his throat and expectorates on the floor. After affectedly announcing "the first chapter of my new novel," he utters a few obscure and disconnected words, then says, "I will skip the next sixteen chapters as they are concerned only with the psychological development of chapter one." The word "psychology" takes a severe beating, and not only here, as we have discovered in conversations.

September 30

TO-DAY, V.'s nameday (St. Vera's), is celebrated by our new non-believing friends with at least as much zeal as the church-going "White Russian" regulars in Hollywood. They bring her broad-loom linens, an electric samovar, lacquered trays, wood and terra-cotta miniature animals, and they bring a new conviviality, too, in which all trace of the official manner of a week ago has disappeared.

October 1

PRAVDA to-day has a large photographic spread of hate-ugly faces with captions about "the racial war in Mississippi." And the Russians ask us, with genuine incredulity I think, how such things are possible "in a country as advanced as *Amerika*."

Lunch at the United States Embassy with Ambassador Foy Kohler and Krilov of the Soviet Embassy in Washington. The Ambassador begins a speech in Russian but switches to English midstream, asking an aide to translate the latter part. What he says, in substance, is that I.S., as a Russian American, is a unique link in cultural relations. But the Russians—Krilov, Furtseva, Khrennikov—listen with blank faces, do not reply, and do not applaud. (I suppose their attitude must be that I.S. is a guest of the Soviet Union and not a U.S. cultural exchange artist.) But I.S.'s position *is* extraordinary, for though he is one of the few Russian creative artists since the literary giants of the 19th century to have attained a relatively high order of world prestige, he has been *persona non grata*, until now, only in Russia. After lunch he makes the point, privately, that the big cultural exports of the United States and the Soviet Union are the same: pianists, orchestras, ballets, "in other words, not creative talent but performing talent—which is fine, of course, though the prospect of more and more *Wunderkinder* playing Tchaikovsky concertos is not exactly my idea of a musical Eden." He also says that whereas in the U.S. the artist complains of the government's rejection of responsibility to help art, in the Soviet Union he might decide that the highest duty of government is to leave it alone.

Reception by Madame the Minister of Culture and the leading Soviet composers, in a private room at the Metropole. (The dinner, white veal and Kievski *kotleti*, proves that very good food exists if ordered by the right person.) This is the most extraordinary event of the trip, a kind of "Last Supper" (for non-disciples) during which I.S. reveals his Russian-ness more completely than at any time in the fifteen years I have known him. Mme Furtseva presides at the centre of the table, with I.S. to her right and Shostakovich to her left; seeing the two St. Petersburg-born composers so close together, one is struck by the fact that their complexion and sandy hair are exactly the same. V. sits across from Furtseva and between Aram Khatchaturian and Kara Karayev, and I am next to Karayev and my earphones, Alexandra, who translates word-for-word. Shostakovich's

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is the most "sensitive" and "intellectual" face we have seen so far in the U.S.S.R. He is thinner, taller, younger—more boyish-looking—than expected, but he is also the shyest and most nervous human being I have ever seen. He chews not merely his nails but his fingers, twitches his pouty mouth and chin, chain smokes, wiggles his nose in constant adjustment of his spectacles, looks querulous one moment and ready to cry the next. His hands tremble, he stutters, his whole frame wobbles when he shakes hands—which reminds us of Auden—and his knees knock when he speaks at which time the others look anxious for him, as indeed they might be. He has a habit of staring, too, then of turning guiltily away when caught, and all evening long he peeks illicitly at I.S., around the rounded corners of Mme Furtseva. (No betrayal of the thoughts behind those frightened, very intelligent eyes.) His new wife sits beside him. An adoring pupil, perhaps, but by age, looks, and her equally shy, serious, distant manner, a daughter.

Then it starts. *Confiteor me.* Each musician proposes a toast that is, in effect, an invitation to return to the fold. And each speaker begins by baring his soul, confessing to some guilt, some shortcoming of his own, some misunderstanding of I.S., some prejudice or lack of sympathy—and it is the nature of these confessions that I find so "Russian" and also so characteristic of I.S.; I mean all those remarks in our books which seem to Anglo-Saxons so lacking in reticence. Oblomov may have disappeared in the Revolution, but Stavrogin is still very much around. Only a little of this is needed to turn the room into a Finnish bath, in the vapours of which, proclaiming and acclaiming each other's Russian-ness, everyone says almost the same thing. I.S.'s human qualities are lauded—they are Russian qualities, after all—and the man . . . well, all who have met the man have seen how truly *genuine* he is. No one says a word about the composer, and only Shostakovich toasts future works by him—though, to be fair, none of them has or could have any idea of the stature of the composer, and they certainly do not intend to slight the composer.

Again and again they abase themselves before the mystery of their Russian-ness, and so, I realise with a small shock, does I.S. In fact, his replies are soon overtaking the toasts. In a very sober speech—he is less alcoholically elevated than anyone in the room—we hear that "The smell of the Russian earth is different" (it is) "and such things are impossible to forget" (they are, and so far so good). But he goes on to tell Khatchaturian and Khrennikov of a desire to know more of their music, which is not so good, not only because untrue but because they have avoided mention of *his* music. All that Khatchaturian has said was that I.S. had been a "legend" to him all his life, "but now that I have seen the man I am greatly moved by his sincerity" (cheers)—a non-sequitur that leaves little doubt about the nature of the "legend." I.S.'s serious confessing gets underway in his reply to Mme Furtseva who, after a patriotic preamble, advances the somewhat dubious proposition that "all really great men are optimists"—commenting on an "optimistic" remark by I.S.

Not "in effect," but in actual quotes, I.S. says: "A man has one birthplace, one fatherland, one country—he *can* have only one country—and the place of his birth is the most important factor in his life. I regret that circumstances separated me from my fatherland, that I did not bring my works to birth there and, above all, that I was not there to help the new Soviet Union create its new music. But I did not leave Russia only by my own will, even though I admit that I disliked much in my Russia and in Russia generally—but the right to criticise Russia is mine, because Russia is mine and because I love it. I do not give any foreigner that right." (Bolshoi applause.) An astonishing speech to at least *this* criticising foreigner who, accordingly, is beginning to feel more foreign every moment; so astonishing, in fact, that the I.S.'s are slightly embarrassed to have had it overheard, even by me. But it is believable, and so is every word he says to-night except the professed interest in Khrennikov's and Khatchaturian's music. I.S. does regret his uprooting and exile more than anything else in his life, which I say not because of a few emotional speeches, even though they have come from the depths, but because of his change of nature in Russia, and the perspective of it from Russia outside. In Hollywood, for instance, where his domesticity is entirely Russian, where he still slurps his soup, Russian style, from the same spoon with which his *babushka* used to feed him in Russia seventy-five years ago; where, if possible, he will go through the day speaking only his mother tongue. Or in Baden-Baden, five years ago, when he flew into a rage at the news of *Sputnik*, and forbade us even to mention the achievement. Was the power of this jealous hate (the mother's deprived love) responsible for his acquisition of "Western sophistication"—that is, as a weapon to prove his superiority, or that of other cultures, to the Russia that failed to recognise his talent? I have no answer, but I am certain that to be recognised and acclaimed as a Russian in Russia, and to be performed there, has meant more to him than anything else in the years I have known him. And when mother Russia restores her love, forty-eight years are forgiven with one

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suck of the breast—several sucks of vodka, in fact, at this deeply Dostoievskyan dinner.

October 2

RECEPTION at the Canadian Embassy. Stalin came here once, mistook a photograph of King George V for the Czar, thought he was being insulted, fled. So says the Ambassador, anyway. And he tells the popular story about the child who asks its *babushka* if Lenin was a great man. The *babushka* says yes, of course, and then the child wants to know about Stalin. A very bad man, says the *babushka*. "And, *babushka*, Khrushchev?" "Hush, my child, he is still alive." The Ambassador has a fine collection of abstract paintings by Karitnikov and other artists who are not shown publicly, and he takes us to see the Kostaki collection of icons and paintings by the pre-Revolution *avant-garde*: early Kandinskys—an especially fine one on glass—Gabos, Larionovs. Kostaki's gallery is his three-room flat in a huge apartment house many kilometres from the centre of Moscow.

To-night is our first concert with Kiril Kondrashin's orchestra. The musicians are younger than those of the Moscow State Orchestra, their ensemble is drier and more exact, and the varnish on the sound is less thick. I receive flowers from my piano soloist, Tatiana Nicolayevna, who looks and plays as though she could have won several events in the Olympic Games. The orchestra presents me with its recording of Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony inscribed by about fifty of the players.

October 3

A BUFFET, by Ralph Parker, for I.S. and the performing plutocrats, Rostropovich, Gilels, Kogan, Oistrakh, Bezrodny, etc. Parker now functions as liaison man between our hosts and ourselves, and he is our chief "outside" source of information as well, which is to say that he relays the tenor of the Soviet reaction. Parker is shy, intellectual, helpful, hungry. He is passionate about painting, and he has good prose style, with a delightful sense of humour. Over the years, now twenty-one in the Soviet Union, he has developed the discretionary habit of whispering. He will sweep into the room, look as though ready to shout "Eureka," but then sidle up and softly buzz something in your ear. I.S. calls him "Signor Sotto Voce."

October 4

FOG OBSCURES even the towers of the Kremlin, but does not delay our afternoon flight to Leningrad. We eat at the airport, ordering from a menu in Russian and Chinese. A smooth flight (one class), during which Alexandra talks to me about psychoanalysis. "Self-indulgence," she says. "We should be taught to master ourselves with will-power, and to solve our own problems." I try a utility argument, pointing out that capitalist psychotherapy has helped many people to lead useful lives, and I suggest that it will appear in the Soviet Union *pari passu* with the rise of the cultural élite. I even try to compare Freud to Marx, in the sense that the ideas of both men changed the world—one finds oneself in that sort of argument here simply because of the lack of example; Alexandra is probably better read in pre-20th-century European and American literature than I am but she has never heard of a single one of the books I cite as "Freudian." And "Freud" leads to "Society," which, she says, is only a question of "What is good for the people." When I imprudently ask who decides what that good is, she accuses me of "philosophy, which is only putting the world in parentheses. The Good is better living conditions and the freedom to pursue one's inner life." We also talk about "the parisitism of the bourgeoisie," and whether or not the U.S. is "a common denominator society using 'individualism' as a slogan." But Soviet planes are fast, and no conclusions are reached.

The Leningrad welcoming committee is smaller, older, poorer than the Muscovite. One pale elderly gentleman greets I.S. and starts to weep. It is Vladimir Rimsky-Korsakov, and I.S. has failed to recognise him, apparently because he has a moustache instead of, as when last seen, a beard. But the real reason, I.S. tells me later, was that he said "Igor Feodorovich" instead of *Jeema*. "He always called my brother Guri, and me Jeema." Vladimir lives in the same apartment house in which I.S. wrote *The Firebird* (in the English Prospect). Relatives of I.S.'s friend and co-librettist Stepan Mitussov are present too, and a nephew of Diaghilev, a man with an old-fashioned and most un-proletarian manner who speaks English and French; and a daughter of M. K. Ciurlionis, the Latvian Odilon Redon, and again the daughter of Balmont, with another basket of posies and moss, and a photograph of her father in goatee and shoulder-length hair, like Buffalo Bill. The Leningradski are more European than the Moscovichi; they bow, kiss hands, do not shy from foreign, and especially German, expressions.

After driving an hour through post-war suburbs, I.S. recognises the old Riding School, and from then on it is home. To right and left, everything is *"chudno,"* or *"krassivo,"* and he has a story to tell about each building. We pass along the Neva to the green and white Winter

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Palace—rose and white when the I.S.'s saw it last—and down Nevsky Prospect to the Yevropaisky Hotel. V., who stayed here on visits to St. Petersburg in her student years, says that the furnishings—German pianos, Louis Seize clocks, Empire beds, desks, chairs—are exactly the same.

In the evening we see Tolstoy's *The Living Dead* at the Alexandrinka which, like all of the old theatres we have seen in the U.S.S.R., is spectacularly beautiful. But the title of the play is also a perfect description of the performance, and as our seats, in the first row, tip uncomfortably towards the orchestra pit, and as the gypsies singing in Romany are a Himalayan bore, we depart after the first act.

A late-night floor show in the hotel roof-restaurant. A magician is sawing a woman in half on a platform at the end of the room, but a party of Cubans at the centre table keeps shouting "Vi-va Khrush-chev," and applauding in rhythm. Are they vivisectionists?

October 5

After the morning rehearsal we drive to Peterhof, now Petrodvorets, and Oranienbaum, now Lomonosov, the city of I.S.'s birth. On the road out of Leningrad, we pass women shouldering large nets of cabbages which, says Alexandra, they are taking home to salt. Views of the Gulf of Finland, the derricks of the Cronstadt shipyards, and of war scars: charred buildings, and woods half-cropped from artillery fire. Petrodvorets itself has been badly shot up, though in spite of that, and of systematic German demolition, admirably restored. A Russian tank has been fixed as a monument at the point of the furthest German advance.

The principal Petrodvorets palace is said to be Rastrelli's magnum opus (by those in our company) but Nature—romantic rustication as arranged by Rastrelli and others—is at least as great an attraction. We walk in Peter the Third's Dutch tulip garden (where Lermontov conceived *The White Sail*), in *bosquets*, and on pollarded poplar avenues; poplar petals have fallen or blown over the fir trees like yellow snow. We walk by fountains, cascades, stairs, statuary—a gold Samson, Russian strength, destroying a Swedish lion—and a pond in which, two centuries before Pavlov, fish came to be fed at the sound of a bell.

The long rows of unpainted wooden *datchas* in nearby Lomonosov can hardly have changed from the time of I.S.'s birth (except for the forest of TV poles), but I.S. has not seen the city since he was a few days old, in any case, and he has no clue as to where he was born. From the group of delectable rococco palaces outside and above the city, the architectural fancier may choose Menshikov's, which is domed the shape of a Grand Duke's crown, or Catherine's pale-rose Chinese palace, or her *"palais des montaignes russes."* The Peter-period palaces are low, long, flat, and colonnaded. With them is an artificial lake on which the Czar's mock naval battles were fought.

Reception at Monferrand House, now the Leningrad Composers' Union. About thirty of us sit at a "T" table, with I.S. at the intersection, directly under a portrait of Glazunov. From this ironic position issues what must have been the Union's first two-hour monologue on the "twelve-tone system." But it is received by people incomparably better informed than any gathering has been so far, and the young men reveal themselves almost as *frondists* in comparison to their Moscow colleagues. The atmosphere is that of a provincial club welcoming a hometown hero, though the evening has none of the stuffiness of an "historical occasion"; the meeting is lively and the hometown boy has never enjoyed himself more. In fact, only Glazunov seems not to be having a good time.

One of the "twelve-tone" apaches is Dmitri Tolstoy (son of the writer, Alexei), a stately and corpulent young man (a pronounced pyknic-cyclothymic type, in fact), who presents I.S. and myself with little piano pieces of that description dedicated to us. After proclaiming himself an admirer of I.S.'s music he makes a ludicrous and heartbreaking request: "Could you please send me a score of *The Firebird* and anything else you have written?"

At midnight, as we return to the hotel, a hundred or so queuers are waiting on the sidewalk by the Philharmonic Hall. According to Parker, each of them represents a block of a hundred seats. They will remain there all night, too, though each watch may be broken into several reliefs. Parker says that the queue is a year old, and that each place in it has had to be checked every month and, as the date drew near, every week, and, finally, twice a day (before and after working hours). An 84-year-old cousin of I.S. has told Parker that she received the number 5001 and that therefore she will have to see the concert on television.

October 6

The queue, this morning, stretches around the corner to Mikhailovsky Square.

A concert of I.S.'s *Septet* and *Octet*, and an exhibition of Stravinskyana, at the Composers' Union. Five hundred guests gather in the panelled oak library under large likenesses of Tchaikovsky, Moussorgsky, Glinka, Glazunov,

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Lenin. The instrumentalists, all students, are excellent, but their *tempi* are erratic and the *Octet* Finale is played faster than we had ever supposed possible. The music stops, too, exactly where the sides come to an end in somebody's old recording, even though the phrase is in mid-career. For the *Septet*, Professor Maria Yudina steps to the piano, an instrument she plays with skill and control, though the music (the *Gigue* anyway) makes little sense here and cannot have pleased the audience, no matter how earnest the applause.

It is Yudina's night of glory. She escorts I.S. through the exhibit, listens to the *Octet* sitting at his side, receives him "humbly" on stage at the end. Her own stage behaviour might have been learned from Klemperer. She will not bow or smile, and our most energetic applause is acknowledged by a trifling nod. She will, reputedly, cross herself before playing, and with passionate ostentation (it is said), and one supposes that Soviet audiences are conspicuously not moved by this. She will read impromptu lectures, too, or poems by Pasternak, and she stopped once in a Prokofiev sonata, saying, "I cannot continue with *this* after Beethoven." Yudina has carried I.S.'s torch in the Soviet Union longer than anyone else, and in recent years, through I.S.'s Paris friend Pierre Suvtchinsky, she is in communication with Stockhausen and other composers of that generation. Not unexpectedly, she does not sit smoothly with the powers of the Composers' Union, and when to-day, at their luncheon party, she pops a book from under the table and attempts to make them listen to her read religious philosophy from it, strong expressions of dislike are exchanged on both sides. Yudina's Stravinskyana fills walls and glass cases in several rooms, and includes photographs of Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern that are probably being seen for the first time in the U.S.S.R. After to-night's concert she flies to Moscow to play I.S.'s piano concerto, and then back here for another performance Monday. In profile, playing, she looks something like my idea of Bach without his wig. Full face, in the street, with her cane and handbag—from which she is forever pulling books, jars of honey, sweets, poems by Pasternak—she looks like (and is) a Doctor of Philosophy.

October 7

WE LISTEN to tapes of four new Soviet compositions, at the Composers' Union. The first is part of a cantata, a triptych on texts by Essenin, Blok, Mayakovsky. The music, by Sviridov, a pupil of Shostakovich, is steady, solid, unhurried (all euphemisms for "boring," of course, but I *am* at least trying). It does not venture beyond a primitive triadic scheme, and of the one or two pleasing instrumental ideas, the piccolo-contrabassoon octaves were more effective in *Alexander Nevsky*. In the context of the Sviridov, the second piece, a quartet by Salmanov, qualifies as experimental music. The Bartok *pizzicato-glissando* is used, and naïvely repeated; but perhaps the device comes from Gnessin, who was the composer's teacher, and not Bartok. The third piece is a violin-piano sonata by Ustvolskaya, who appears to have been exposed to Bartok, too—those so terribly sad falling minor thirds—but who is, in fact, another student of Shostakovich. Our friend Mirzoyan is the author of the final piece, a symphony for strings and timpani that starts with a steppe-like *largo*, goes on to some *Schelomo* (equally profound, I regret to say), and concludes in a fast movement, which is half rhapsody, half Moscow two-step, and all *kitsch*. (After these samplers, no doubt carefully chosen to please good old radical us, how can I.S. continue to proselytise for a school whose musical logic is at least a light year away, and whose emotional world is on the other side of the galactic field? But he has had the same reactions, in fact, and he tells me later, "That was the real *fer rideau*.")

IN HIS reminiscences, I.S. has hardly mentioned the green, white, and gold Nikolsky Sobor, which is an architectural marvel even in this city. The omission is surprising because the Nikolsky is so near his home that the belfry, a separate building, can be seen from the street in front of his house; and not to mention that belfry—he never has—is like living a block from but not mentioning the Taj Mahal. But all of I.S.'s descriptions of the city in our books are greatly misleading as to scale and space. The Nikolsky is a double-decker church of which the upper part is a sun-filled but otherwise empty room, and the low-arched lower part is a sanctuary for old women. The lower church is illumined by oil-wick lamps suspended from the ceiling, and by tallow candles carried by a few votaries. V. joins a queue to buy a candle, but she is made to pay four times more than anyone else, which is no doubt a social justice (Robin Hood type), but which leaves her with the inference that in the new Russia, experiences of this sort occur only in churches. I.S.'s niece's husband and son-in-law accompany us, albeit with an air of derring-do. They have lived a block away most of their lives, and both are architectural engineers, but they have not ventured inside the church before. They watch I.S. with amazement as he dips his fingers in the stoup, crosses himself, and genuflects. Leaving the Nikolsky, we pass a synagogue,

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bulb-domed like a church, with a large gathering of the bearded and black-hatted in the street in front.

The Krukov canal, in front of I.S.'s old apartment, is about twenty-five feet wide. The buildings on the other side are all new, but the iron railings on the canal are the same, he says, and so is the wooden footbridge at the corner. The street is still cobblestone, too, and tram-cars still skid loudly by on their rails. A plaque commemorates the residence of the "composer and conductor" Napravnik in the house next door to the blank wall commemorating the thirty years' residence there of the composer of *Le Sacre du Printemps*. I.S. says nothing as he looks at the door I have so often heard him describe—it opens directly on the street—and he shows no trace of emotion. Contrast this with his reaction, around the corner, to the Conservatory and the Maryinsky Theatre. As soon as he recognises the former, an involuntary "*Glazunov*" comes out (after fifty years!). He then looks the other way, at the green and white Maryinsky, and his whole face ripples with pleasure. Anyone seeing this could not doubt that he had learned to hate music at the one place and to love it at the other.

A FAMILY DINNER at Xenia Yurievna's, number 72 Ulitsa Glinka. I.S.'s old apartment, next door, at number 66, is identical to this one, Xenia says, and her statement drastically shrinks the scale of I.S.'s published recollections. Xenia's husband fought at Stalingrad, and from there to the end of the war at Magdeburg. She herself was in Leningrad throughout the siege, working with a burial battalion: a third of the city's civilian population died from starvation. Xenia's family, children and in-laws, all in their twenties, are attractive, shy, cheerful, scientifically-minded, and they all have a smattering of English. Xenia's Stravinskyana contains a large number of ancestral portraits, medallions, and photographs, most remarkably, a daguerreotype of Ignatievich, I.S.'s great-grandfather, a mutton-whiskered old tom-cat aged 110. (Ignatievich died aged 111 as a result of a fall suffered while climbing over the fence on his way to a forbidden outing: the doctor had ordered him to stay home, and the family had locked the gate.) The photographs of I.S.'s father include several of him in the costumes of such basso roles as Holofernes and Sparafucile. Of a thousand or so family group photographs, I.S. figures in perhaps a third, and of the third, about a half were posed in Ustilug and Petchisky. In a photograph of I.S. in his room, dated 1899, the walls are as crowded with pictures and mementos as they are now in Hollywood, except that Berlioz and Wagner were prominent among the deities then. But the most striking photograph shows I.S. writing down the music of an itinerant and blind old concertina player. Xenia also owns a small landscape, in oils, by I.S., dated 1900. And packets of letters from I.S. to her father Yuri; these break off in the 'twenties, and after a decade of silence conclude with a note from *Editions Russe de Musique* in Paris announcing the deaths of I.S.'s mother, wife, and daughter. And several letters of Rimsky-Korsakov, though whether or not with references to I.S. I have no time to discover. And programmes and press books concerning every performance of I.S.'s music in Russia both before and after 1917: Petrenko singing the *Pastorale*, Gorodetzsky's *Spring*, and, with Warlich and the Court Orchestra, *Le Faune et la Bergère*, January 22, 1908 (O.S.); Ansermet conducting *Mavra* and the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* in 1927–1928; Klimov conducting *Les Noces* in 1926 and *Oedipus* in 1928; Stiedry conducting the *Little Suites* and *Le Sacre* in the same years.

An emotionally disturbing evening for I.S., one would have thought, but I have seen no sign of it. V. says, though, that he reverted to childhood expressions several times during dinner.

IN THE EVENING we go to the Maryinsky Theatre, to see *it* and not *Lohengrin*, of course, which is in the way. (I.S. had wanted to see *Kitezh*, in fact, but the Composers' Union resisted that idea with mysterious excuses. Parker explains that the performance is famously bad.) I.S. is again wildly wrong on scale. With seventeen hundred seats, the Maryinsky—light blue and gold, with a blue ceiling and a chandelier—is less than half the size of his description. I.S. says that portraits of singers, including his father, stretched across the hem of the curtain when he was a child. The Intendent tells us that *Lohengrin* was mounted to honour Ribbentrop's visit in August, 1939, and was also scheduled for performance the day of the German invasion. (I am misquoting him, though, for he will not say "German," but only "Fascist.") To-night's performance is the first since then, he announces proudly, but we would have been happier with the ban. A bust of Lenin now stands in the upstairs foyer where I.S., as a boy, saw Tchaikovsky.

October 8

FOLLOWING the morning rehearsal, I.S. informally lectures a group of young musicians on "the seriation principle" but some of to-day's questions are of a different stamp:

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"Doesn't it constrain inspiration?" "Isn't it a new dogmatism?"

I.S.: "Of course it is a dogmatism, but don't dismiss it because of that. So was 'the old system' constricting and dogmatic, to bad composers."

Then, turning to Khrennikov, "You, too, Tikhon Nikolayich, will be trying it soon.

Everyone laughs at this and, most magnanimously, Tikhon Nikolayich himself, who recently informed a composers' conference that "the twelve-tone system has no place in Soviet music" and to whom, therefore, the laugh must have had a sharp edge. All the same, I.S.'s colonising has gone about as far as it can on a verbal level—though he has yet to recommend pieces to perform. My own feeling is that to the custodians of this outward-growing society, Webern's music can only seem like the nervous ticks of a moribund culture. I feel no need for it here, in any case, or correspondence between it and what I have seen of Soviet life, while on the other hand, a Stravinsky-shaped hole did at least exist.

OUR FIRST CONCERT, at 8. A last-minute request for tickets by teenage boys from the "Stravinsky Club of Kharkov." I.S. tells the audience that he attended his first concert in this hall, and "Sixty-nine years ago I sat with my mother in that corner"—he points to it—"at a concert conducted by Napravnik to mourn the death of Tchaikovsky. Now I am conducting in the same hall. I am very happy." This moving little speech is even more of a success than the music which was, as I.S. quips, "half Tchaikovsky" (*Le Baiser de la Fée*) "and half Rimsky-Korsakov" (the *Fireworks* and the *Firebird*). We have asked the Composers' Union to invite Nadejda Rimsky-Korsakov to the concert—the *Fireworks* was composed to celebrate her marriage—but we learn now (a whisper from Parker) that the old lady has refused because she had always known that I.S. was not fond of her husband, or, for that matter, herself.

October 9

A WET DAY, but we walk from the Hermitage Bridge to the Pushkin Museum. Traffic on the Moyka River: several punts and a kayak. Dmitri Tolstoy waits for us at the Museum, looking like my idea of Pierre Bezukhov, except for the too luxuriant hair. Pushkin's death mask emphasises the big brow, the dilated nostrils, the small mouth. The library is half foreign-language, and the relics include the vest he was wearing at the duel. From Pushkin we go to V.'s former residence at the Moyka corner of the Champs de Mars (this sand-graded parade ground, when the I.S.'s knew it, is now a garden with a mammoth war memorial); and the Aptekarsky Ostrov, the island where she was born (but which would have been a more appropriate birthplace for I.S.; *Aptekarsky* means apothecary). On Kammeny Ostrov we see the tree, now in the middle of a street, planted by Peter the Great; the Peter and Paul fortress; a corvette (is this the "Aurora"?), the first to mutiny in 1917, now a naval museum; the house of Kshessinska with a plaque by the balcony from which Lenin addressed the crowd.

Fourteen kilometres of the Hermitage this afternoon, or so says Alexandra. We go through being surprised by the dimensions of familiar pictures—the "Madonna Constabile," which can be circumscribed by the hands of a pianist—but nothing else I can say about the Hermitage will satisfy me.

LENINGRAD is tall, regular, Western, straight—in comparison to circular, haphazard, oriental Moscow. And in Leningrad, the royal city, after Moscow, the proletarian one, the population does look drab, if only because the buildings are so sumptuous.

I.S.: "The best thing in Leningrad is St. Petersburg." St. Petersburg is a city of romantic bridges and islands, and small cobblestone streets and byways—not yet macadamised like the large thoroughfares. St. Petersburg must be the only great city in which the ugliest buildings are churches: the Issaksky, which is a heavy, black roost for imperial eagles, and which deserves to be in Berlin; the Kazansky, which imitates St. Peter's and deserves to be in Rome, Georgia; the Spassa Nakrovee on the site of Alexander the Second's assassination; and the Gostinny Dvor (the "upside-down trousers," as I.S. calls it). And St. Petersburg is a polychrome city: the ochre Dance Academy (which, incidentally, is the size of an American aircraft factory); the green Gorki theatre; the red Anichkov Palace; the peach-coloured stables by the Champs de Mars; the yellow Yussupov palace (in which Rasputin's murder took place—the first stages of it, anyway). And St. Petersburg is a city of classical angles and perspectives, and of planned space—uniquely, of the semi-circular space cut back from the corners of the streets contiguous to the Fantanky River. But St. Petersburg is a lonely and melancholy city at night, like Venice in winter. Even now, in October, it is deserted after six o'clock and very dark—street lamps are far apart. At midnight the fog hangs low over the canals and the city has a ghostly gloom. One imagines the Yussupov palace full of light and gaiety, as it

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once was, but the beautiful old building is empty, dark, and dead.

TEMPTING GENERALISATIONS I will never pronounce in public. Russians are: *hospitable*; *sentimental*; *optimistic* (more so than Americans, at any rate); *patient* (an amazing capacity to stand in queues, especially in Leningrad); *garrulous* (I.S. has not stopped talking since he arrived, and heavy artillery wouldn't interrupt most of them, but the voices and the language are less grating than French and German ditto); *direct* (the compliments, not to say encomiums, they tell in their toasts), but not *frank* (they will hide the reason for something they do not wish to reveal, like dogs burying bones); fundamentally *friendly* (they are more friendly to us than we are to them, certainly, even though they are the more suspicious of political sentiments); *generous* ("You like it? Here, take it"—never the spirit of *"Klein aber Mein"*). Russians do not have "good manners," in our sense, but they have a much readier affection. I, at any rate, have never known a more affectionate friendship, in such a short time, than with Karen Khatchaturian, with whom I am able to speak only very haltingly. Russians have no commercial spirit—none of our venal pursuit of money, in any case—and no wasteful competition. American and European composers hate one another, the younger ones especially, and though Russian composers may dislike each other intensely—some of them ought to, for sure—they co-operate and function as a professional unit in a way U.S. and European composers might envy. "Sophisticated" conversation—which means, I suppose, a wide reference of intellectual bric-à-brac—is in short supply. It is replaced by "enthusiasm."

To the midnight train for Moscow after the concert, carrying bags and bouquets. As we pull out of the station, Diaghilev, Tolstoy, Rimsky-Korsakov, Balmont run alongside for a moment, like another era trying to catch up.

October 10

SUNRISE through green forests touched with gold. From Klin to Moscow, we press noses to the corridor windows. Coloured barns and *isbas*, people in shawls, caps, and boots on their way to work—a feeling of I.S.'s world in the *Pribasoutki*, and of Kandinsky and Chagall of a half-century ago. Back in the National Hotel, I.S. receives a letter and a genealogy from a Polish branch of Stravinskys living in Danzig. At noon, Khrennikov and Khatchaturian arrive laden with farewell gifts of samovars, gold spoons, gold tea-glass holders, inscribed scores.

Farewell banquet at the Metropole, a happy occasion, with no speeches and no formality; in fact, it becomes somewhat too relaxed as bread pellets and then apples are flipped about the room. Wives and husbands sit next to each other at these affairs; the wives we meet are physicians, or chemists, or archaeologists, or, in any case, scientists.

Shostakovich, this time at I.S.'s side, looks even more frightened and tortured than at the first conclave, probably because he thinks a speech is expected of him. He converses neutrally at first, then like a bashful schoolboy blurts out that he had been overwhelmed by the *Symphony of Psalms* when he first heard it and that he had made his own piano score of it which he would like to present to I.S. Seeking to return the compliment, I.S. tells Shostakovich that he shares some of his high regard for Mahler. Poor Shostakovich starts to melt, then quickly freezes again as I.S. continues with "But you should go beyond Mahler. The Viennese troika adored him also, you know, and Schoenberg and Webern conducted his music." Towards the end of the evening, and after drinking several *zubrovkas*, Shostakovich pathetically confesses that he would like to follow I.S.'s example and conduct his own music, "But I don't know how not to be afraid."

I.S., going to bed, says he can already imagine a conversation on the other side:

> "The Russians have skyscrapers."
> "Yes, but they are built on mud and will soon collapse."
> "Well, they do have very good roads."
> "Of course, but they are the work of slaves."

October 11

TELEPHONE from the Kremlin at noon fixing an appointment with Khrushchev, who has returned late last night from a twelve-day tour. We enter by the Bashnya Borovitskaya at 1.30. Khrennikov says, simply, "Nikita Sergeyevich," and the guard asks no identification. We drive beyond St. Ivan's, gleaming white and gold, to the Council of Ministers building. Suslov waves a greeting from the sidewalk, as we arrive, but he walks by, which surprises Khrennikov who has expected him at the meeting. A solitary soldier stands at the door, and a civilian secretary who leads the I.S.'s to a tiny elevator and who walks the two flights with me. A large cloakroom, a long corridor, a waiting-room like a doctor's office, with a table of foreign-language magazines and a portrait of Marx on the wall like the doctor's old professor. After five minutes here, the same secretary ushers us to a long room with a long conference table covered in green billiard cloth.

Khrushchev, behind a desk at the far end, sees I.S.'s limp and hurries to approach. I.S.,

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addressing him "Nikita Sergeyevich," apologises "for taking time that must be doubly crowded after your long absence." Khrushchev, hardly taller than I.S., with brown, swivel eyes—you would not be able to look if they were larger—gives us short, energetic handshakes with a pudgy, short-fingered paw. "But I wanted very much to meet you." We sit at the head of the billiard table, I.S. and V. facing Khrushchev, myself and Khrennikov next to him. Lenin is present, too, in a photograph on the wall behind Khrushchev's desk, and in a frame on his blotter next to a file marked *"Tass"*; and Marx, beyond racks of pull-out maps, over the door.

Khrushchev rests his rimless spectacles on the green felt, asserts his elbows there, and begins to talk about his trip. "I had been promising to visit Turkestan and the Aral Sea region for a long time and though I was too busy now, I felt I had to do it. I was so impressed by what I saw that I came back by train to have time to think about it." He describes the irrigation of the "Hungry Desert," in which "skeletons of camels have been found, though no humans have been able to exist there. We have built a canal thirteen-hundred kilometres long and redirected the once dried-up Amu-Darya. Rice and cotton are now growing, and in a few years the whole region will flourish." Anticipating the future, and not only of these regions, Khrushchev beams with pleasure and becomes even more excited and energetic. He smiles, then, exposing a gallery of dental gold, but he does not smile all the time, which is one's impression of him from newspapers. "The world's largest and fastest supersonic jets are being built in Tashkent," he says, smiling at the prospect of the Soviet lead in "inertial navigation." He describes a territory, near Samarkand I think, in which "The English found gold—mere gold—but where we have discovered fountains of naphtha and inexhaustible deposits of copper. The gold is still mined, but as a quaint sideline industry." He says that the women in these regions "like to display their wealth by wearing heavy red velvet, even in that oppressive heat, but they live in squalid houses which they will not improve because of an old fear of being taxed. When, recently, television sets, refrigerators, and washing machines came to stores there, everything was sold in an instant and paid for from barrels of money." Talking about the good living conditions on the Soviet side of the border, and the misery on the Indian side, his tone is slightly aggressive and boastful. (I.S., later: "I think he wants India.") I.S. asks him if the people in these regions speak Russian or if he uses a translator. Khrushchev: "All *my* republics speak Russian and I have never used a translator in our country."

But I.S. translates, for me, this being the only occasion in the tour at which Alexandra has not been present. Conversation studded with statistics and geographical names is easy to follow, however, and, of course, no speaker could be more concrete. Afterwards, the I.S.'s remark his "very correct Russian." Khrushchev is acutely sensitive to whatever we say, and even more sensitive, I think, to whatever we might say, and clearly he does not want I.S. to talk about music. (But what are his thoughts about this elderly emissary from the Russian past?) Almost all of the talking comes from Khrushchev, in any case, and because he can hardly contain himself on the subject of his trip, nearly all of the forty minutes are devoted to that. We do exchange observations about Moscow, though, and when the I.S.'s tell him how beautiful they have found the city, Khrushchev says: "Yes, not long ago I drove around really looking at it and I was impressed myself, but for eight hundred years it was a pigsty." As we leave, he repeats Khrennikov's invitation to stay in a *datcha* in the Crimea, carefully including myself. I say *"bolshoi spassibo,"* and he, graciously, *"prieyzhiety opyat"* (come back).

I.S., in the car: "He is like a composer playing you the composition he is working on and of which he is very full and very proud."

SHEREMETEVO AIRPORT. Reporters, tape-recorders, television cameras. U.S. reporter to V.: "I understand you had an interview with Khrushchev."

V.: "It was a visit, not an interview. *This* is an interview."

Reporter: "And did you talk about music and the arts?"

V.: "Mr. Khrushchev is not a musician. We did not exchange banalities about 'art,' therefore, but listened to him recount fascinating things about his trip."[2]

Reporter to I.S.: "Will you say something about the beauties of Russia?"

I.S.: "Beauties are to be loved, not talked about."

"Mr. Stravinsky, what was your impression of Khrushchev?"

I.S.: "I was pretty certain that there are no palace eunuchs running his affairs."

A hundred new friends and now familiar faces crowd round stuffing our arms and pockets and hearts with all kinds of presents, and bottles of vodka, tar-like lumps of pressed caviar, photographs, flowers, kisses, embraces, tears.

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[2] Next day in the Western press: "As Khrushchev is ignorant of music, he talked banalities about his trip."

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Five Poems by T. Carmi

Words to a Sorceress

I can't remember this: I can't keep track.
Autumn pounced at me on my homeward way.
I shed my hands, leaf-light and very quietly,
And my inquiring voice did not come back.

Flails fell, and I was scattered, as chaff flies.
My shadow sneaked away from my front door.
My eyes deserted me, flying to the shore.
She had snared my neck from far with lovely eyes.

A sign, give me a sign. But don't unmask
Too much. Perhaps I am too late in this place—
I can't remember much, so do not ask—

For still the pool of water holds my face.
Through the ring of whisperers reach towards me, console
Me. Your voice, folding me, will make me whole.

Building Site

On the tiers of the scaffolding, there are no fears
For the start. Night hums through us on crossing wings.
Distances in the palm are wakeful things:
"Tomorrow: or next year: or countless years . . ."

At a ladder's foot, the drowsing watchman dreams:
A door, a ceiling, curtains and a bell—
In the meantime, the water-meter still
Waits to be fished up from the streams.

Pull your hand, please, back out of night, and place
Infinities of dishevelled surmises where
My hand is: and an eternity of hair
In the moon. The tiers are lovely now. And yet,
Where, I wonder, and how, shall I shield your face
On the great day when the building stands complete?

Even If She Sleeps

Even if she sleeps, her hand will still emerge
From sleep, aware, more than the surgeon's hand,
Of odour, breath, and pulse: and understand
The distant whisper of the hidden dirge.

Even if she sleeps, her ear is open still
To the clang of cold metal and the heavy stir
Of an eyelid. All the wakefulness in her
Waits for the strange bewildered calm to fall.

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Even if she sleeps a little, still she keeps
Watch on leaf-fall and the awkward hurry of Spring,
On the next one who will die, and each living thing.
Peace to her dream. She sleeps:

But her skilled hand will still chop surgically
At living flesh, until the end of day.

When She Went Off

When she went off she trusted it to me
(Or left it with me as a gift perhaps)
This bitch, expectancy,
Which battens on the words of gate and bell,
And the vine rustling at the sill.

The night (lie still!)
Stands tall, unmoving, empty of her steps.

Ssshh! My sweet bitch, it's not my fault, you see,
(My keeper's services are honorary)
That tongues of rust saw at the gate, that all
The leaves like hailstones fall.
Come here, my beauty. Here to me, I say,

Muzzled, of course,
And from your jowls I'll wipe the froth away.

Awakening

Please pass your hand across my lips.
I'm not accustomed to this light.

Batlike our love in flight bangs round through dark.
It does not miss its mark: and your face shapes
My hands for me. What shall I learn in light?
Quick, pass your hand across me.

Your childhood (what's the time?) slept in my arms.
It's ten o'clock between the sea and night:
Midnight between us: seven between the blinds—
Oh no, I'm not accustomed to this light

Which comes to make cold slits of both my eyes,
Opening like gunsights. On those scales I weigh
My blind eyes, and the terror of your clay.
Quick, pass your hand through me.

Face to face, I'll have no face, perhaps.
Perhaps I'll stay quiet, or perhaps I'll talk.
Please pass your hand across my lips.
I'm not accustomed to this light.

translated by Dom Moraes

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NOTES & TOPICS

Comment on Annan

TWO POINTS in Noel Annan's rich and lively essay on the university [ENCOUNTER, April] strike me as worth developing further: the topic of graduate schools in Arts faculties; and the question of university government.

GRADUATE SCHOOLS. As Annan points out, graduate schools are a part of the American pattern of higher education. They exist in the United States to train scholars and teachers for the universities and other institutions of higher education. To some extent they supplement the less specialised work done for the first degree; and the final reward of the good graduate student, the Ph.D., has immense importance as the university teacher's trade-union card because the first degree is not so organised and classified that the potential academic—the English "First"—stands out as a result of work at the undergraduate level. But this is by no means the whole truth about American graduate schools. In them work goes on that in terms of breadth and depth is far superior to anything to be found in this country. The only graduate school (in the Faculty of Arts, let me repeat) which in any way compares with the American model is that leading to the Oxford B.Phil. (a two-year, not, as Annan says, a one-year course).

Hitherto the recruitment of university teachers of Arts subjects has been extraordinarily haphazard and there has been a strong and justified resistance to the requirement of the Ph.D. for such teachers. How many of our leading scholars over the age of fifty have doctorates, apart, that is, from any honorary doctorates an admiring world may have conferred upon them? The danger now is that with the rising demand for university teachers pressure to work for a Ph.D., already considerable, may grow. This means that able young men and women will be forced into pure research at the end of an undergraduate course which, whatever its merits, is far from being comprehensive. At a time when the young graduate should be broadening and deepening his knowledge of his own subject he may be forced into a narrow piece of research from which he may learn scholarly techniques worth having, but these will be bought at the high price of retarding his general education and, possibly, turning him into a pedant. The remedy is plainly the establishment of broad graduate schools on something of the pattern of the Oxford B.Phil. This is probably happening already on a bigger scale than is generally known. In many universities the M.A. examination offers a sketch of what could, with greater numbers and more careful organisation, become a graduate school in history, English, philosophy, and so on. Whether it is a good thing to keep the old nomenclature is doubtful. M.A. tends to mean either, as at Oxford and Cambridge, a certain seniority and the payment of a fee; or a not very advanced research degree; or, absurdly, the first degree in Scotland. It is hopelessly ambiguous, even within the university world. Certainly, the Ph.D. has a place in the structure of higher degrees in Arts faculties; but it ought to come, as it does in the United States, after a period of comprehensive graduate study.

UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENT. The modern universities are for the most part better at getting things, especially new things, done than are Oxford and Cambridge. This is a virtue in the present world; and it is a virtue that springs from what may all the same strike one as an indefensible way of governing the academic community: the running of a university by a monarchy (vice-chancellor and/or registrar) tempered by the largely professorial oligarchy of the Senate and its important committees. This is linked with a departmental system in which professors are normally departmental heads as well as senators and busy committee men. The professors groan about this situation and complain they cannot get on with the work of scholarship and research; but tend to resist any attempts to relieve them of their administrative burdens; for administration is inseparable from power, and academics like power nearly as much as other men do.

There is a certain *malaise* among the non-professorial majority of the senior body in modern universities. They are, as it were, proletarians and tend either to seethe with proletarian rancour or to lapse into proletarian apathy. One sees pretty much the same *malaise* among back-bench members of the House of Commons, though these have at least the consolation of knowing that in a purely formal sense they have the power to make and break the Executive. There is a demand, sometimes pressed with vigour, sometimes not much more than an idle dream, for a greater measure of "democracy" in university government.

J. M. CAMERON *is Professor of Philosophy in the University of Leeds.*

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Plainly this is a tricky question. One kind of democratic reform, the proliferation of representative committees, could easily sink university government under a fearful weight of verbiage, procedural disputes, wrangles over jurisdiction, electioneering, and so on. The modern universities could develop all the vices of the ancient without having the compensating charms of the incomparable visual scene and the rich flavour of tradition. And, since universities have to be run somehow, or the University Grants Committee will want to know what is amiss, the running will in fact be done, not by the *demos*, strangled by its many-stranded rope of committees, but by the vice-chancellor and the registrar. But what they are doing will be only dimly discerned through a haze of democratic humbug.

Modern universities in a world where pressures and demands are continually changing can best be run on a Bonapartist model. There has to be immense power at the centre, or the necessary initiatives will not come. Swift adaptation will be impossible. Building programmes will founder or will go astray because committees of academic persons cannot make up their minds, or make them up one way one day and change them the next. (Annan could no doubt tell us some horror stories about his own university.) But there is absolutely no reason why power at the centre should be united with a predominantly oligarchic constitution. Publicity and the widest possible discussion, so that the idiosyncrasies of those who hold the power are tempered by knowledge of the mind of the university, these are surely prerequisites of a healthy academic community. Open criticism and informed discussion make good vice-chancellors better. But for there to be this openness, this athletic mode of discussion, rights and privileges must be generally distributed among the senior members of the university, at least among those whose appointments are not temporary or probationary, and not restricted to the professoriate and a handful of their senior colleagues.

J. M. Cameron

London Commentary

Gladstone at the Finland Station

By David Marquand

THE British working-class movement has so far produced three leaders of undoubted greatness: Ramsay MacDonald, Ernest Bevin, and Aneurin Bevan. Of the three, Bevan was the most attractive, the most imaginative, intellectually the most original, and ideologically the most profound. Yet it is clear, in retrospect, that his achievements did not match his talents. Unlike many Left-wing Socialists he knew that politics is about power; that Socialist politics is about the acquisition and purposive use of power; and that a Socialist movement which abandons the struggle for power will become sterile, and eventually fade away altogether. But judged by the harsh test of power, he was himself a failure, though a magnificent one. For most of his political life he was in opposition—not only in Parliament, but in his own party as well. Out of a political career of over thirty years, less than six were spent in office. Most of the causes he championed went down to defeat. The United Front campaign in the 'thirties failed. The Popular Front campaign led to his expulsion from the Labour Party. His attacks on Churchill's wartime strategy appealed only to the converted. The Health Service charges were imposed in 1951 in spite of his opposition. His campaign against German rearmament was defeated. His bid for the leadership of the Labour Party was unsuccessful.

According to his enemies there was nothing surprising in this catalogue of failure. Bevan, as painted by a hostile press, was a mere demagogue, intoxicated by his own phrases, corroded by class bitterness, and incapable of serious and constructive political activity. That account is

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obviously absurd. In fact, Bevan was not a demagogue. His speeches appealed to the intellect more than to the emotions, and on any meaningful definition of the term they were far less demagogic than those of Ernest Bevin—to say nothing of Lloyd George or Roosevelt. In any case, his record as Minister of Health refutes the charge that he was incapable of constructive work. Clearly, the true explanation of his repeated political failures is more complex than the myths propagated by the Tory Press and the Right wing of the Labour Party. Equally clearly, it must lie partly in his own temperament, partly in the tactical mistakes which he and his supporters made, and partly in external circumstances. But as it stands that generalisation is almost vacuous. The proper task of a biographer of Bevan would be to analyse in detail the extent to which each of these three factors was responsible for particular failures at particular times, and in doing so to illuminate some of the darkest and most fascinating corners of recent British history. Unfortunately, the task has not been adequately performed in the first volume of Michael Foot's biography.*

Foot has approached his subject as a self-confessed hero-worshipper, not as a historian. Perhaps because of this he has undoubtedly managed to convey something of the magic of Bevan's personality, and something of the wayward genius that lay behind it, with a warmth and insight which few political biographers can equal. In his pages, Bevan comes tumultuously alive, sprawling superbly through the arid wastes of the 'thirties, scattering a golden shower of epigrams as he goes. But Foot's warmth and insight are directed almost exclusively to Bevan, Bevan's admirers, and Bevan's heroes. The idea that Bevan's opponents may also be worthy of sympathy, or at least of a serious attempt at understanding, scarcely seems to have entered his head. For Foot, Bevan is an idol who can do no wrong, who rarely makes mistakes, whose judgments are almost invariably borne out by events, and whose defeats are engineered by the trickery and intrigues of smaller, meaner men—who somehow contrive to find themselves in control of the party machine whenever a decisive moment comes. Thus, Attlee is written off as the Lepidus to Lansbury's Antony and Cripps's Octavius, and the qualities which enabled him to remain Leader of the Labour Party for twenty years are not even examined, far less appreciated. Bevin is depicted as an autocratic and intolerant union boss (which, of course, he was), but the constructive patience, negotiating ability, and political judgment which made him the greatest union boss in British history are hardly mentioned. Morrison and Dalton are dismissed with even smaller ceremony.

Yet these four, with all their shortcomings, were the dominant figures in the Labour Party for some twenty years. No one who reads through the Annual Conference reports for the 'thirties can doubt their pre-eminence in Labour's councils. To dismiss them as intellectual and moral pygmies, as Foot in effect dismisses them in this book, is to turn the movement they led into a movement of pygmies, and to make the history of the British Left in the 'thirties and 'forties incomprehensible. For the fact is that in almost all the major conflicts between the Labour Party leadership and its Left-wing critics during the 'thirties, it was the leadership which won. If the leadership was as mediocre as Foot implies, how can its victories be explained? Only two answers are possible. Either the Left was equally mediocre—or the rank and file of the Labour movement were themselves so mediocre that they failed to perceive the mediocrity of their leaders. Neither answer does much credit to Bevan's activities at the time.

But in fact, of course, the dilemma is imaginary, since the Party leadership was not mediocre. The conflicts between Left and Right in the 'thirties (like those in the 'fifties, for that matter) were not epic battles in which a handful of intellectual and moral Gullivers contended against battalions of Lilliputians. Both sides had a fair share of ability, integrity, and courage, as well as of stupidity and self-seeking; neither had a monopoly of wisdom or folly. On the crucial issues of foreign policy and defence, and the related issues of political strategy, both made a number of appalling mistakes. The Left justified its opposition to rearmament on the grounds that the National Government in Britain was little better than Fascist itself, and might therefore misuse the weapons it obtained for its own imperialistic purposes. In fact it would be hard to imagine anyone less likely to engage in imperialistic ventures than Stanley Baldwin. But on the Spanish Civil War, the rights and wrongs were reversed. The British policy of non-intervention had no justification in international law since the Republican régime was the legal Government of Spain, and as such perfectly entitled to purchase arms abroad. Even to-day it is hard to read the speeches on this issue delivered by the Party leadership at the Edinburgh conference without wincing.

In the same way, the Left's position on the United Front seems in retrospect incredibly naïve—while the Right's position on the Popular Front seems hopelessly obtuse and inflexible.

* *Aneurin Bevan* (Volume I). MacGibbon & Kee, 45s.

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The United Front was to be an alliance of the "working-class" parties against capitalism. Its champions failed to see that in Britain the working class was already united, for all practical purposes, in the Labour Party. The Communists and the I.L.P. commanded no substantial segments of working-class support, and if the Labour Party had joined a United Front with them, it would have lost the support of other classes, without making any compensating gains. But on the Popular Front, the positions were reversed. Now the Left was proposing an alliance of all anti-Chamberlain groups, whether "capitalist" or not; and the Right denounced the project as a betrayal of Socialist solidarity. It is arguable that such an alliance would have failed to work, but it seems astonishing that the Labour Party leadership should have refused even to attempt the experiment—and worse than astonishing that it should have expelled Cripps and his followers from the Party for trying to convert it to their view.

But if the rights and wrongs were evenly balanced in this way, why is it that the Left consistently lost? Foot does not ask this question directly, but even so his book contains a clue to the answer. In almost all the major conflicts between the Labour Party leadership and its Left-wing critics in the 'thirties, one fundamental issue was at stake. At bottom, all the major conflicts were conflicts about the implications for the Labour movement of British parliamentary democracy. To the Right-wing leadership, those implications seemed obvious. The Labour Party was the heir of the old Liberal Party. In 1929 it had almost won an absolute majority of the seats in the House of Commons. In 1931 it was true most of its parliamentary strength had been swept away—but that was solely due to the incompetence, cowardice, and wickedness of Ramsay MacDonald, Philip Snowden, and Jimmy Thomas. Freed of the incubus of pusillanimous and treacherous leaders, the Labour Party would soon recover, and indeed surpass, the position it had enjoyed in 1929. All that was necessary was to play the parliamentary game by the familiar rules, to fight elections at the appropriate times in the approved manner, and by the display of statesmanship and moderation to win over a sufficient proportion of the floating vote to gain a parliamentary majority.

But as Foot points out, these propositions suffered from a number of defects. In the first place, they totally failed to account for the *débâcle* of 1931. The Labour Party leadership in the 'thirties occupied a position *vis-à-vis* Ramsay MacDonald similar to that occupied by Mr. Khrushchev *vis-à-vis* Stalin. The more they protested their disgust and contempt for their late leader, the harder they found it to account for their own behaviour under his leadership. It was easy enough to make MacDonald the scapegoat for the failure of the 1929 Government, and this was rapidly and effectively done. But a number of nagging doubts remained. Had MacDonald suddenly become a "traitor to Socialism" poltroon in 1931, or had he been one all along? And if he had been one all along, how was it that his Ministers had failed so signally to notice the fact? And if they had noticed it, how was it that they had flinched from doing anything about it? These doubts nurtured others. The political strategy of the Labour Party leadership in the 'thirties was not substantially different from that followed by MacDonald and Snowden in the 'twenties. But if the MacDonald-Snowden strategy had led to 1931, what guarantee was there that the Morrison-Dalton strategy would lead to a more inspiring destination? Dalton had declared, at the meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party held after the formation of the National Government, that whereas the first Labour Government had been dismissed by a "Red Letter," the second had been dismissed by a "Bankers' Order." But if the first two Labour Governments were so easily dismissed, why should a third prove more resolute? Because Dalton said so? But no one could have *sounded* more resolute than MacDonald.

These doubts were reinforced by the course of events in Europe. The constitutionalist creed of the Party leadership, and the parliamentary strategy which derived from it, seemed hopelessly inadequate in face of the spread of Fascism. The Labour Party leadership set its face against joint action with the Communists—yet across the Channel it seemed that the Communists, almost alone in the working-class movement, were prepared to kill Hitler with something more deadly than their mouths.* Where the Labour Party leadership concentrated sagely on winning elections (with small success) the Fascists won bloodier victories, without opposition from this country. The leadership argued that its orthodox parliamentary strategy might lead to a Labour victory in the general election of 1939 or 1940. But in the meantime what would become of the Spanish Republicans? And in any case, what guarantee was there that Labour *would* win in 1939 or 1940? Its performance in 1935 was nothing to be proud of, and the by-elections that followed did not point to a sufficient swing to guarantee a Labour

* It is true, of course, that Communists in the Soviet Union—and later in Spain—were also engaged in killing Socialists. But this was conveniently ignored by the Left-wing of the Labour Party in Britain.

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victory in the next general election. It is true, of course, that Baldwin had won the election of 1935 on a platform which he later repudiated. But if the Conservatives could steal Labour's clothes in 1935, they could do the same in 1939 or 1940.

SUCH WERE THE DOUBTS of the Left, and Foot does full justice to them. But he fails, as the Left failed at the time, to suggest a credible alternative to the orthodox strategy of the Right. The Left saw the weaknesses in the narrowly constitutionalist position of the leadership. But it shrank from a thoroughgoing revolutionary alternative and failed also to construct a theoretical half-way house between revolutionism and constitutionalism. Most of the Left-wing leaders of the 'thirties had imbibed fairly heavy doses of Marxism. But they failed to draw the appropriate Marxist conclusions from their Marxist premises. Thus Cripps opposed the rearmament programme in 1935 on the grounds that the British Government was not "a workers' Government," and that it would therefore be driven, by the inexorable logic of capitalism, to embark on imperialist ventures on its own account. But if this was in fact the case, surely the Left should have given a more emphatic reply than a campaign of speech-making and pamphlet-writing? The same applies to the arguments over the United Front. As we have seen, the United Front made no sense in the context of a parliamentary strategy, since the I.L.P. and the Communists had no actual or prospective parliamentary strength to offer. It might have made sense in the context of a revolutionary strategy—but no revolutionary strategy was devised to accompany it.

It seems clear, then, that what the Left really wanted in practice was not an alternative to parliamentarianism, but a more aggressive, and above all a morally more intransigent, form of parliamentarianism. Powerful arguments could be adduced to support such a demand. In the 'thirties, as in the early 'fifties, the Labour Party leadership often seemed unable to distinguish between caution and cynicism, and forgot that if a Left-wing Government is to come to power in this country the politics of interest must be supplemented by the politics of moral protest. The Labour Party had become the major progressive party in the State largely because the virulent personal antagonisms which divided the Liberal Party after 1916, and still more the squalid performance of the Lloyd George Government in Ireland and over the sale of Honours, appeared to demonstrate the moral bankruptcy of orthodox Liberalism. After his fall from power in 1922, Lloyd George attempted to re-occupy a position on the Left. He failed, to a large extent because he could never entirely rid himself of the stench of the Black and Tans. But in the 'thirties, the Labour Party leadership often seemed to ignore the lesson of Labour's rise in the 'twenties. The manner in which its leaders maintained internal Party discipline was scarcely calculated to appeal to decent, liberal-minded voters; its domestic policy could be represented—unfairly, but that is beside the point—as sectional and unpatriotic; its foreign policy failed to offer a coherent and compelling moral challenge to the Government's.

The Left was justified in sensing this, and in demanding a more inspiring moral posture. Where it failed was in clothing that demand in inappropriate *Marxisant* phrases, whose logic contradicted the logic of the demand itself. What Left-wing members of the Labour Party really wanted was to see their leaders emulating Gladstone at Midlothian. By saying so in accents reminiscent of Lenin at the Finland Station, they misled their listeners and confused themselves. It would be anachronistic to blame them. On the whole, in spite of their confusions, they emerge from the controversies of the 'thirties in a more attractive light than their Right-wing rivals do. But it is one thing to sympathise with their predicament—and another to slide over its consequences.

The Complacent Satirists

THE British now seem to be a nation of satirists who live by taking in each other's dirty linen. The new trend undoubtedly indicates rumblings in the national psyche, but is it satire at all? It would clearly be of value to clarify what we mean by satire, and here Professor Gilbert Highet in his recent book* is of less use than he might have been. Satire—he reminds us—originally meant a kind of rag-bag or Irish stew, a little of everything; the description would admirably fit his own book. *The Anatomy of Satire* originated as a series of Princeton lectures before an audience which apparently needed to be told who Aristophanes and Montesquieu were while its acquaintance with Mort Sahl and Shelley Berman could be assumed. Professor Highet provides all the ingredients for a study, but since he seems more concerned to cover the whole field from Greek times to the present without omitting anything which might conceivably be classified as satirical than with drawing distinctions between satire and un-satire, the reader is finally left to sort out the rag-bag for himself.

Now when one has sorted out the great

* *The Anatomy of Satire* (O.U.P., 30s.).

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satirists from the lesser and the borderline cases, it transpires that the essence of satire lies in catching the audience by surprise in order to bring its members to see *themselves*, *their* beliefs, *their* institutions, and *their* behaviour in an unfamiliar, ridiculous, and unfavourable light. Though satire usually assumes the guise of entertainment, its intention is quite different, being to make people feel uncomfortable, guilty, or ashamed of what they believed, did, or supported. The satirists were invariably men of ideas and convictions who criticised existing institutions and prejudices by reference to enduring values. Professor Highet, like many critics, calls the great satirists "conservatives" for this reason; this is misleading, since they were far from being supporters of the *status quo*, but merely held that change can be for the worse as well as the better.

The choice of satire as a didactic medium means the rejection of the direct polemical approach as unsatisfactory or insufficient, for one reason or another. This has seldom been because of official censorship, since the censor can rarely be expected to remain oblivious to what the audience is intended to find obvious. The censor that the satirists usually set out to circumvent was in the minds of their audience themselves, whose passions, prejudices, conservatism or vested interests rendered them impervious to reason. The aggressive, self-righteous, and intolerant wasps and birds who form the chorus in Aristophanes' eponymous plays symbolise the Athenian public of his day, the people he had to convince if Athens was to be saved from herself and inevitable disaster. Even if he had been able to harangue them, they were far too flushed with war fever and corrupted by the system of paid jury service to give him a serious hearing. Satirists have never wasted their time preaching to the converted—as the morality play did—or writing for posterity like Procopius; they applied their art and grasp of psychology to putting over an unpopular case. Aristophanes, Swift, Gogol, Montesquieu, Mark Twain (in works like *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and *The Connecticut Yankee*), and Gilbert and Sullivan (in works like *H.M.S. Pinafore*) developed the same methods because they faced similar problems, to win the ears of their fellow countrymen for off-beat ideas, and to moralise without appearing to preach. This need dictated the satirists' technique of combining two levels, the fictional and the didactic, and of developing the fictional level far enough to induce the audience's interest and identification before introducing the didactic.

Gulliver sets off on his travels, is shipwrecked, has to swim for dear life, a sure way of inducing reader-identification, and undergoes several adventures before Swift feels that the reader is ready to be allowed to see a recognisable caricature of Britain. Montesquieu takes Uzbek through a tour of the Middle East to give the reader a chance to sympathise with him before eventually bringing him to Paris, the object of the exercise.

Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur must be the climax of a satire, never the prologue. Montesquieu declined to write a sequel to the *Lettres persanes* on the grounds that satire could not operate where the audience was forewarned; if the readers asked for satire that was sufficient proof that they did not need it and could take their moralising straight. In a society like ours, where politics are free, ubiquitous, and polarised, and where the arts and letters are automatically scrutinised for their ideological significance and message, and the public apprised in advance, the scope for genuine satire is inevitably restricted. The reviewers can be relied on to de-fuse a satire by labelling it, whereupon the converted dutifully enjoy and the hostile reject before reading. For example, the intentions of would-be satirists like Wyndham Lewis and Roy Campbell were recognised right away in the 'thirties; the cognoscenti read them for the fun of guessing who was who; sympathisers with their ideas enjoyed sharing vicariously in their verbal aggression; the innocent read them without really knowing what it was all about; while the left shunned them like the plague. George Orwell succeeded to the extent that certain of his caricatures and expressions imprinted themselves on thought-ways and language. These, together perhaps with a few of Peter Simple's characters—General Nidget, Jack Moron, Doreen Gaggs—are very nearly all that satire had been able to achieve in several decades. But then, how can one deal satirically with Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Khrushchev, or the Bureaucracy of Parkinson's law? Even a truly original thinker capable of placing his finger on the basic weaknesses of our times—to which all of us, left, right, and centre, are blind just as most preceding ages have turned out to be—and of satirising them with talent, would be deprived of much of his impact when reviewers or critics explained: "Mr. A.'s hero, Mr. B., symbolises the predicament of...".

None of these difficulties affect any of those who now advertise themselves as "satirists," for the very good reason that though they have borrowed a few of the props, they are not satirists at all, and in many ways are the diametrical opposite. Whereas satire approached its

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quarry by stealth, they shout at the top of their voices that they are satirists, both as a promotion gimmick and for the apparent immunity it confers. For example, if there really could be such a thing as a satirical night-club, it would presumably lure revellers with the promise of leg-show and risqué cabaret, and then before they were quite aware of what was happening, indoctrinate them against affluence, expense-account living, or whatever evils were to be satirised. Instead, "The Establishment" blazons the legend, "LONDON'S FIRST SATIRICAL NIGHT-CLUB" and then offers cheap smut. (I am referring to the recent Ray Martine show.)

Satirists swam against the current; the B.B.C.'s *That Was The Week That Was* evinced no desire to do this; like all entertainment it gives the public what it wants. Its success throws ominous light on the public mood.

TWTWTW went for the easiest laughs, and predictably followed the current trend of angry-youngmanship in choosing its weekly butts: the Government, de Gaulle, Dr. Beeching, the Americans (though these entertainers have copied most of their techniques from the U.S.A.). Just as, in music-hall, certain joke symbols were enough in themselves to raise a laugh from audiences in a mood to meet the entertainers half-way, pseudo-satire has developed its own conventions: instead of Landladies, Bottoms, Chamber-pots, Bobbies, and Foreigners, we now have Prime Ministers, Authority, the Church, Foreigners, Homosexuality. Whereas real satire attacks the audience, to make them feel ashamed and uncomfortable, this political music-hall flatters the audience, making them feel superior and sophisticated and all jolly fine fellows together. Their small review sketches never attempt to bring out hitherto unnoticed absurdities or injustices, but rather to capitalise on existing feelings. They usually take a point which is manifestly absurd, for example, Thomas Galbraith's tribulations in consequence of writing courteously to his staff were summed up by Galbraith with the remark that he would never write to anyone as "My Dear so-and-so" again. *TWTWTW* took this and stretched it out so thin that far from adding point, they subtracted it. They could hardly do otherwise, because satire's job is not to labour the obvious and paint lilies, but to create new awareness.

Like old-fashioned music-hall, the new fashion has discovered how sweet are the uses of obscenity. "Everyone likes a little good clean filth" was the motto which brought success to a music-hall star of the last generation. People have not changed, apparently, but the barriers against the commercial exploitation of smut in the mass media had been raised. It now transpires that by brandishing the word "satire," inhibitions can be dulled, which suggests that they could not have been very strong. People enjoy being gently shocked, and men enjoy seeing women being shocked by verbal expressions of sexuality; it seems to offer vicarious release of sexual aggression. A few puns on words like "balls," "ballroom," "oars–whores," "clap" "going to bed with," and innuendos about choirboys and effeminacy first arouse sniggers, then a few high-pitched, half-ashamed, half-defiant laughs from women, which in turn trigger off the men's laughter. The old Lancashire expression "where there's muck there's money" has gained a new dimension, and compulsive joke-tellers can now claim to have been talking satire all their life without realising it.

TWTWTW, *Private Eye*, and "The Establishment" have all followed the tradition of the popular Sunday newspapers in giving the public the opportunity to enjoy their weekly moral indignation and sexual titillation scrambled. *TWTWTW* has succeeded in combining censoriousness and salaciousness—in sketches ostensibly satirising strip-tease and Sunday journalism—with a touch which the *News of the World* would have been proud of (plus the added advantage of live chorus girls). They really manage to eat their cheesecake and have it too.

If nothing is to be sacred, then even sacred monkeys can scarcely hope to retain their immunity for very long.

The trend has sometimes been described as "blowing away outmoded conventions and taboos," and compared with works of Voltaire, Swift, and de Maupassant. But if sniggers at smut were attacks on taboos, then taboos would have vanished long ago. In fact this is not an attack on taboos, but their exploitation; the laughter is part and parcel of the taboo-syndrome. Swift had no time for laughter for its own sake; for him laughter was the surgeon's knife cutting away tumours.

Private Eye has re-discovered the popularity of sheer abuse. Epithets like "rot," "rubbish," "nonsense," and accusations of dishonesty against well-known journalists are enough to thrill some readers week in week out and give them the feeling that they are "in." Like *TWTWTW*, *Private Eye* ascribes the worst possible motives to the Home Secretary; their recent number implies that he is guilty of anti-semitism and colour-prejudice because of his decisions over Soblen, Lenny Bruce (is Bruce a Jew? did Brooke know this? did this conceivably motivate his action?), and Chief Enahoro. Here again the antithesis between angry-youngmanship and satire stands out. The

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satirists wrote from knowledge and experience of life, and showed full awareness of the inherent dilemmas of power, the unavoidable choices between greater and lesser evils; otherwise they could never expect those with experience of real problems to take them seriously. The pseudo-satirists, however, approach the dilemmas of power with adolescent arrogance, and imply that if only all grown-ups were not such squares and politicians not fundamentally wicked men, there would be no dilemmas.

IN A RECENT STUDY which failed to gain the recognition it deserved here, possibly because the wave of "sick humour" and commercial-satire which made it topical in the U.S.A. had not yet reached this country, Professor Elliott[1] traces the pre-literary origins of satire and lampoon in magic and ritual. He shows how institutionalised verbal aggression and obscenity provided an outlet for the frustrations and resentments which are the inevitable accompaniment of civilisation and its restraints. If I understand him aright, *Private Eye* and *TWTWTW* act as conductors for free-floating aggression and sexual frustration, as comparable institutions did in early Greek civilisation, in Celtic Ireland, and among African tribes.

This vicarious function would explain not only the new vogue's wide popularity, but also the identification it has succeeded in evoking among writers known to pride themselves on their taste and discrimination and who would in the normal course deplore its vulgarity, crudity, and low cultural level. This is the most likely explanation for Angus Wilson's recent lapse (*Queen*, February 13th):

> *TWTWTW* is a very good thing, and those like me who enjoy it are the good element in the country, and those who would like to see it come to an end are the silliest and nastiest... they (those who criticise Bernard Levin) just do not know what basic liberal standards are. They are what Mr. Levin has....

Only strong emotional identification with professionally angry young men could make Mr. Wilson write exactly like one of his own darling dodos. But in this he reflects a fairly widespread mood of frustration and the desire to hit hard in almost any direction: "Damn now, think later." But is it only because the B.B.C. has given up the aspirations associated with Lord Reith's name, and chooses to minister to the new mood by placing its technical and financial resources and protective mantle at the disposal of *TWTWTW*, that the show has been able to raise this mood to such a power? No other medium would dare make such unbridled attacks on individuals, both public figures and private citizens who have little chance to answer back.[2] This may be partly due to the residual aura which remains to the B.B.C. from its Reith days, and partly because the claim to satirical immunity will take time and further libel actions against less privileged practitioners, like *Private Eye*, to erode. Or, on the other hand, satirical licence may become accepted as a convention, and their effect diminish with familiarity. The mention of *That Was The Week That Was* or *Private Eye* in themselves now raises a laugh, just like Macmillan, de Gaulle, or mothers-in-law.

It is noticeable that unlike *Private Eye*, which glares balefully at everyone (including the B.B.C.), *TWTWTW* has been selective in its sacred-cow slaughter to the extent that it has left the new-image B.B.C.'s herds of sacred cows alone. This is understandable, since although they can cheek the Prime Minister with impunity, a word from the Director-General to Producer Ned Sherrin is enough to bring them to heel. In effect, they enjoy the status of sacred monkeys in a temple, who may badger anyone but the officiating Brahmin. This licensed anger is a far cry from the anger of the satirists. In fact, it exemplifies a process remarkably similar in broad outline to the decline of values against which many of the most representative among the great satirists protested.

Alfred Sherman

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[1] *The Power of Satire—Magic, Ritual, Art.* By Robert C. Elliott. Princeton—O.U.P., 45s.

[2] For example, Ambrose Heath was subjected to a lampoon by David Frost for the apparently heinous crime of having written a number of cookery books over the years, and of having "done well out of the war" by writing on how to produce tasty meals from war-time rations instead of "doing his bit." Why someone who was past military age should be given a white feather in 1963 by a young man who himself took no part in the war, and what object there was to the exercise except personal malice is difficult to say, but the audience enjoyed it and Mr. Heath has no redress. The programme, like *Private Eye*, has also been dabbling in anti-Semitism, having tired of flogging sacred cows, and their attack on Charles Clore would not have been out of place in *Der Stürmer*; but again, the B.B.C. would probably be the most difficult and dangerous of all media for Mr. Clore to take libel action against.

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"Censored, Banned, Gagged"

Letter from Johannesburg — By NADINE GORDIMER

PETER ABRAHAMS, Harry Bloom, Hans Hofmeyer, Daphne Rooke, Ezekiel Mphahlele, and I myself are some of the South African writers who share the experience of having had books banned in our own country. Why were our books banned? If one were to judge by the monotonous insistence with which the necessity to protect pure young minds from "cheap filth," etc., was invoked as justification for the new censorship bill in recent parliamentary debates in South Africa, one would conclude that these books must be pornographic. In fact, of the six writers I have mentioned, none deals sensationally or with more than passing frankness with sex, and two (in those books of theirs which were banned) do not, by reason of their subjects, touch upon sexual relations at all. Although the Minister of the Interior and the Nationalist members of parliament never mention political reasons for censorship, these books, and almost without exception *all* those books by South African writers which have been banned, have been banned for a political reason: nonconformity with the picture of South African life as prescribed and proscribed by apartheid.

I think I am the only one who has ever been favoured with an explanation for a book banning. I was informed that the official attitude to my second novel—banned in the Penguin edition in which it would have reached its widest public in my country—was that the book "undermines the traditional race policy of the Republic."[1] That was the truth, for once, the truth behind pious concern for young minds: it's not four-letter words that menace them, but the danger that they may begin to think, and, under the stimulus of certain books, come up with some doubts about the way their lives are ordered. The minds of people who can afford five shillings for a paper-cover edition of a book are apparently considered more tender (or more susceptible?) than those of people who pay eighteen-and-six for the hard-cover edition, since some books are banned in the paper-cover edition only. This is not as illogical as it seems; it assumes that more affluent people (affluent = white) are likely to be living too easy to want to see any change in the "traditional race policy of the Republic" whereas poorer people (poorer = black) are likely to be encouraged by any suggestion that it is possible to "undermine" it.

THE MACHINERY of censorship which has served to ban all these books has now been superseded by a more stringent, sin-mongering, and all-devouring system under the new censorship laws, promulgated in the Publications and Entertainments Act of 1963. Among the defects of the old machinery—from the point of view of a State evidently bent on introducing thought-control—was that it did not provide for internal censorship (that is, of publications produced within the Republic itself) other than in respect of pornography. This is not quite such a gap as it sounds; English-language publishers in South Africa are few, and they stick mainly to graceful, gift-book Africana and adventure yarns; the thriving Afrikaans publishing houses draw both authors and readers from that section of the community which loyally supports the government and, so far,[2] has been unlikely to produce anything that undermines any government policy. At any rate, whatever is published within the country will now be subject to censorship along with whatever is imported, and the decisions as to what should be banned and what may be read will be made by a Publications Control Board, presently to be set up by the Minister of the Interior.

The Board will consist of nine members, all appointed by the Minister, of whom not less than six shall be "persons having special knowledge of arts, language, and literature, *or* [my italics] the administration of justice." The chairman (Minister-designated, again) must be one of the "special knowledge" members, but a quorum is constituted by only four members, and in the absence of the chairman and vice-

[1] My latest novel, *Occasion for Loving* (Gollancz), was held under embargo for a while, but has now been released; its fate, once it is published in a cheaper edition, probably will be the same as that of the earlier novel.

[2] Some of the younger Afrikaans writers are beginning to feel stifled by a literary tradition that ignores the glaring realities of our country's life. If they are moved to write books that do not conform to the tradition of Afrikaans writing, who is to publish them? Afrikaans is not spoken outside South Africa, the Protectorates, and the Rhodesias.

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chairman, an ordinary member may preside. Special committees can be set up to deal with the work of the Board—which will be prodigious, to say the least, since it covers films, plays, "objects," magazines, etc., as well as books. A committee is to consist of one member of the Board (not specified that this should be one with "special knowledge") and at least two other persons appointed as members from a panel designated by the Minister. So that, in fact, whether South Africans will be permitted or not to read any particular piece of literature can and frequently will be decided by three persons, all appointed by the Minister, not one of whom need have even the dubious qualification, where literary judgment is required, of "special knowledge" of the "administration of justice."

There will be no representation whatsoever on the Board or committees outside the Minister's personal choice; but any person may, at any time, upon payment of a nominal fee, submit for the consideration of the Board a publication which *he* personally thinks ought to be banned. Under the old system there was a board of censors which examined books referred to it by Customs, Post Office, or other officials under the various relevant acts, including the Suppression of Communism Act; but the old Board was not a Grundy Ombudsman to whom, as well, cranks, crack-pots, and political informers could take their grudges, confident, on the incredibly wide grounds on which there is provision for them to claim offence, of a hearing.

A publication is deemed "undesirable" if it, or any part of it is

> indecent or obscene or is offensive or harmful to public morals; is blasphemous or offensive to the religious convictions or feelings of any section of the inhabitants of the Republic; *brings any section of the inhabitants into ridicule or contempt; is harmful to the relations between any sections of the inhabitants;* is prejudicial to the safety of the State, the general welfare, or the peace and good order.

The definition of what may be considered indecent, obscene, offensive or harmful to public morals includes the portrayal of:

> murder, suicide, death, horror, cruelty, fighting, brawling, ill-treatment, lawlessness, gangsterism, robbery, crime, the technique of crimes and criminals, tippling, drunkenness, trafficking in or addiction to drugs, smuggling, sexual intercourse, prostitution, promiscuity, white-slaving, licentiousness, lust, passionate love scenes, sexual assault, rape, sodomy, masochism, sadism, sexual bestiality, abortion, change of sex, night life, physical poses, nudity, scant or inadequate dress, divorce, marital infidelity, adultery, illegitimacy, *human or social deviation or degeneracy,* or any other similar or related phenomenon.

My italics are there as a reminder that the racial laws of the country, and its traditional race policies, are such that social as well as sexual intercourse between white and coloured people could be interpreted as "human or social deviation or degeneracy"; and that, in the practical and ideological pursuit of apartheid, *any* mixing between the races is considered "harmful," and criticism of or satire on this curious belief could easily be construed, by those who uphold it, as "ridicule and contempt."

In determining whether a book should be censored or not, "no regard shall be had to the purpose" of the author; which means that no distinction can be drawn between *Ulysses* and *What the Butler Saw in the Boudoir*, or between a revolutionary pamphlet advocating the bloody overthrow of the white man and a serious study of such aspirations. There is a provision that the Board may exempt, at its pleasure to recall the exemption at any time, a publication of a "technical, scientific, or professional nature *bona fide* intended for the advancement of or for use in any particular profession or branch of arts, literature, or science." But how the Board will go about deciding what is *bona fides* and what is not, is not stated.

Much has been made of the concession of the right of appeal to the courts, not included in the Act in its earlier forms (there have been three), but now granted. An author now has the right of appeal to the Supreme Court after his book has been banned by the Board, but he must lodge notice of the appeal within thirty days of the Board's decision. As a book may be banned, at the instigation of anyone, at any time (maybe months or years after publication) and the notice of its banning is not communicated to the author but merely published in the Government Gazette, it could easily happen that the thirty days might elapse before the author became aware of the ban. And a Supreme Court action is an extremely costly privilege by means of which one is allowed, at last, to defend a work which has already been condemned without trial.

The censorship system applies to magazines and periodicals as well as books, of course, and also to exhibitions, films, plays, and entertainment of any kind. (The long list of special restrictions on films includes any scene that "depicts in an offensive manner intermingling of white and non-white persons.") The daily and weekly press, both Opposition and Government, is exempt because the News-

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paper Press [Proprietors] Union of South Africa accepted a "code"—self-censorship responsible to their own organisation—as the lesser evil, when confronted with the alternative of government censorship. The radical Left-wing and liberal publications—weeklies, fortnightlies, and monthlies—have been successfully decimated (the last may have disappeared by the time this is in print) without the help of the new Act, by the simple means of making them staffless—first under the Suppression of Communism Act, by prohibiting all people banned under the Act, or who were even only members of an organisation suppressed by it, from association with any organisations which "in any manner prepares, compiles, prints, publishes, or disseminates" a newspaper, magazine, pamphlet, handbill, or poster; second, under the General Law Amendment Act, by prohibiting five journalists from in any way carrying on their profession.

The special provisions governing paperbacks are making booksellers wish they had become bakers instead. For example, the importation of paperbacks that cost the bookseller less than 2s. 6d. each is forbidden. This piece of legislation was no doubt genuinely intended to keep out trash; but it failed to take into account that thousands of reputable books, including classics, reference, and hand-books prescribed for schools and universities, are imported in paperback editions. If the bookseller wants to import any particular book or series, he may apply, on payment of a fee, to have the Board examine it, decide whether it is "undesirable," and if not, grant him permission to import it. Similarly, exemptions may be granted in the case of books published by a specified publisher; or a specified class of publication from such publisher; or if they deal with any specified subject. Of course, these blanket releases work t'other way about, too: blanket bans may be invoked for specified books; series; editions; and publishers. As for magazines, presumably if one number of ENCOUNTER were to be pronounced undesirable, either that particular number could be banned, or a blanket ban could descend on the magazine.

ALL THE DREARY legalese through which I have followed the writer's situation thus far belongs to the hot war of censorship. But there is also a cold war going on all the time, outside the statute books, and as it is likely to get colder and colder, with the new Act, I should like to explain it. One hears a lot (quite rightly) about the effect the new internal censorship will have on South African (virtually, Afrikaans) publishers: how they will hesitate to publish if they feel there is any risk of banning, so prejudicing the chances of existing or aspirant writers who publish in the Republic. But this censorship cold war began long ago for writers with a wider public, that is, abroad as well as in their own country, whose books are published in England and imported to South Africa as part of the literature of the English-speaking world.

South African booksellers are wary of books by serious South African writers who deal with the contemporary scene. Whatever the interest of the book, whatever the selling power of the author's name, the booksellers risk only very small orders, perhaps a third of what they know they could sell, because they fear to find themselves burdened with hundreds of copies of a book that may be banned either on arrival in the country, or later. (Some publishers ship copies on the understanding of return in the case of banning; others do not.) Publishers are afraid to risk advance publicity for the book in the Republic; the general idea is that it is better to have the book slip in quietly and sell modestly, than to be unable to sell it at all. If the book is subsequently banned, the author has the satisfaction of knowing that at least it has had some chance to be read, if not widely. If it is not banned, its potential distribution and readership have been limited by the intimidation of censorship to an extent that, especially in the case of lesser-known writers, cannot easily be made up by subsequent sales. By the time the bookseller feels "safe" to re-order (remember, anyone can submit the book to the Board at any time), interest in the book may well have died down.

Back to the hot war, now. As I have already indicated, not only censorship afflicts writing and writers in my country. So far as I know, only one author has been affected as yet by what one might call the Mutilation Act, one of the gagging provisions of the Sabotage Act (General Law Amendment Act, 1962). Tom Hopkinson, a South African by adoption for a number of years—was obliged to remove from his autobiographical record of experience in Africa a statement by Chief Lutuli, who, like all banned persons, may not be quoted. Not a matter of much importance in this particular book, maybe; not enough to distort it seriously: but quite enough to establish the principle of mutilation of books through censorship. Enough to show the authors of non-fiction—the sociological, historical, and political studies, the analyses, reminiscences, and biographies—that they are no longer free to present as full a picture of South African life and thought as their subjects and talents can command. The balance has gone from the picture; and the truth, in direct proportion to what must be left out.

The Mutilation Act is only a side-effect of the

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Gagging Act, which, in turn, is part of the Sabotage Act. Under the Sabotage Act it may be considered a crime "to further or encourage the achievement of any political aim, *including the bringing about of any social or economic change in the Republic.*" (As usual, my italics.) The gagging clauses of the Act make the incredible provisions whereby more than 102 people have been forbidden to make any communication whatsoever with the public, neither in speech nor in the written or quoted word. Among these people are twelve journalists and two or three creative writers—the number does not matter; so long as there were to be even one, this Act would provide an example of suppression of writers that far exceeds any restrictions suffered by any other profession. The gagged journalists and writers are prohibited from publishing *any writing whatever*, however remote from politics it might be. This means that Denis Brutus, writing poetry, Alex la Guma, writing a novel while under 24-hour house-arrest, cannot publish either.

CENSORED, BANNED, GAGGED—the writers of my country may be said to be well on the way to becoming a victimised group. They have resisted variously. So far as censorship is concerned, English-speaking writers began to oppose its growth several years ago, with vigour in the case of individuals, rather ponderously and timidly in the case of our only English-speaking writers' organisation, P.E.N. Nevertheless, P.E.N. did submit to the Select Committee on the Publications and Entertainments Bill an excellent memorandum that probably had a mitigating effect on the form in which the Bill finally became an Act. With the exception of a few splendidly outspoken people, such as the poet Uys Krige, the Afrikaans writers seemed to feel that censorship was none of their business until the new Publications and Entertainments Act, with its provision for internal censorship, right here at home where their books are published, changed their minds for them. Once this happened, they began the familiar round of collecting signatures for protest, etc., with which the English-speaking writers were already so familiar, and which, alas, while in the combined effort may have softened the Act a little between its first draft and final form, did not, could not hope to succeed in getting it scrapped.

THE ATTITUDE towards gagged writers and journalists is more complicated, because organisations and individuals in general are inclined to be frightened off by the fact that these are Leftist[8] writers and journalists, some of them named Communists. The sad old paradox arises of those who will fight for the freedom to write what *they* want to write, but are not sure it really ought to be extended to other people who may want to write something different. Perhaps, like the Afrikaans writers, who thought censorship wouldn't touch them, people who keep silent on the subject of gagged writers will wake up, too late, to find that freedom is indivisible and that when professional freedom was withheld from one or two little-known Leftist writers, it was lost to them, too. Individual writers and P.E.N. have issued protests on behalf of gagged persons. The South African Society of Journalists is putting up a strong fight on behalf of the gagged journalists.

Within the small group of intellectuals in South Africa, writers represent an even smaller group; and for that reason perhaps the people of the country might be content to ignore what is happening to them.

But what of the readers? What of the millions, from university professors to children spelling out their first primers, for whom the free choice of books means the right to participate in the heritage of human thought, knowledge, and imagination?

Yes, they still have a great many uncensored books to read, Shakespeare, Plato, Tolstoy, and many modern writers in world literature—though even the classics have been shown not to be immune from South African censorship (much of Zola; *Moll Flanders*; some of de Maupassant as well as Marx); serious writers of all times and origins have been axed. But surely the people realise that no one can be well-read or well-informed or fitted to contribute fully to the culture and development of his own society in the democratic sense while he does not have absolutely free access to the ideas of his time as well as to the accumulated thought of the past, nor while, in particular, there are areas of experience in the life of his own society and country which, through censorship, are left out of his reading? It is interesting to note, in this context, that while the South African government is anxious to convince the world of its eagerness to raise to civilisation the backward African peoples, it has at the same time largely suppressed the first proofs that some Africans

[8] An imprecise definition in South Africa, at the best of times. Randolph Vine and Peter Hjul are members of the Liberal Party who were running a liberal fortnightly, as was its founder, Patrick Duncan, at the time he was put under ban—subsequently he went into exile in Basutoland, left the Liberal Party and aligned himself with the anti-Communist, militantly black nationalist P.A.C.

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have indeed already achieved complete emergence into the intellectual standards of the civilised world. Most of the writings of black South Africans who have recorded the contemporary experience of their people—including Peter Abrahams' autobiography, the literary essays of Ezekiel Mphahlele, the autobiographies of Alfred Hutchinson and Todd Matshakiza, and an anthology of African writing which included stories and poems by a number of black writers from South Africa—are banned. These books were written in English and they provide the major part of the only record, set down by talented and self-analytical people, of what black South Africans, who have no voice in parliament nor any say in the ordering of their life, think and feel about their lives and those of their fellow white South Africans. Can South Africa afford to do without these books?

And can South Africans in general boast of a "literature" while, by decree, in their own country, it consists of *some* of the books written by its black and white, Afrikaans- and English-speaking writers?

Don't Look Down

Don't look down. Once
you look down you own
the fall in your heart;
you rock your stance
on the stone
and hear your ending start.

It climbs up to you
out of a deep pit
in sentences
half-followed through
and sighs which twist it
till it wrenches

at your hold or shows
you as a clown
whose imitation rage
will draw from rows
of seats some laughter thrown
like nuts into a cage.

While high in the big top
a white-clad flyer springs
and it is he you were
who made men stop
and wonder at your wings,
so famous in that air

until you looked down
and saw your future there
in the dust and light
and suddenly were thrown
into that pit where
now you trot each night.

Hugo Williams

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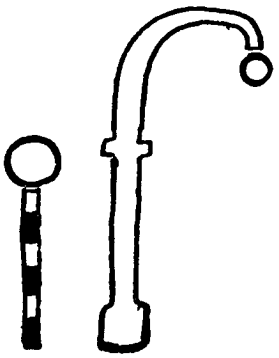

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are changing lanes and tooting horns at you,
If you can trust yourself when coppers doubt you
And even traffic wardens doubt you too;
If you can wait and never shoot the amber,
Or being overtaken don't accelerate,
Or on a corner never curse the camber,
Or brake too soon, or make the turn too late

If you're all right though No Right signs confuse you,
If you don't think that noise means brake horse power,
If you can follow maps designed to lose you,
And drive like Hill—at half his miles per hour;
And if your engine fires though frosts are cruel,
And M1 cruising finds you unafraid,
Yours is the Road, and Super Shell's your fuel
And—what is more—your oil is Multigrade

Go well–go Shell

SHELL

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The World of Michael Oakeshott

Or the Lonely Nihilist — By BERNARD CRICK

The predicament of Western morals... is first that our moral life has come to be dominated by the pursuit of ideals, a dominance ruinous to a settled habit of behaviour; and, secondly, that we have come to think of this dominance as a benefit for which we should be grateful or an achievement of which we should be proud. And the only purpose to be served by this investigation of our predicament is to disclose the corrupt consciousness, the self-deception which reconciles us to our misfortunes.

Rationalist politics, I have said, are the politics of the felt need, the felt need not qualified by a genuine, concrete knowledge of the permanent interests and direction of movement of a society, but interpreted by "reason" and satisfied according to the technique of an ideology: they are the politics of the book.

The morality of the Rationalist is the morality of the self-made man and of the self-made society....

MICHAEL OAKESHOTT[1]

A SPECTRE is haunting the London School of Economics and (please don't forget) Political Science. For ten years the sceptical, polemical, dandiacal, paradoxical, gay and bitter spirit of Michael Oakeshott has been haunting, rather than filling, the Chair of Political Science formerly held by Harold Laski. It is fair to put it this way, for the question at issue is the one that he himself has raised: whether "his subject" (or the job he put in for) deserves to live at all, still less to be lively. When we first heard the incantatory rise and fall of his voice proclaim that famous passage of his inaugural lecture, *Political Education*—"In political activity, then, men sail a boundless and bottomless sea; there is neither harbour for shelter nor floor for anchorage, neither starting-place nor appointed destination. The enterprise is to keep afloat on an even keel...", and when he commented that this was a "depressing doctrine" only for those moved by false hopes, or for "those who have lost their nerve", we thought we were faced with a familiar project of conservative philosophers, even though one seldom attempted, a linking of the ocean of Hegel to the inland-sea of Burke. Indeed a student once wrote across the back of an unopened notebook:

Long ago in London town
Marx turned Hegel upside-down,
Revealing him as sans-culotte;
OAKESHOTT *saved him from that blot,*
Restoring quick his balance true,
He dressed him up in Tory blue;
This seemed to be for L.S.E.,
Dialectical Indecency.

And so we were not much impressed then, or now, by Richard Crossman's brand of instant-polemic in the old *New Statesman*, that Oakeshott was a CONSERVATIVE! It seemed that Crossman had forgotten what a free university was. But we quickly came to realise that if the language was that of Hegel and Bradley, and *some* of the sentiments were those of Burke, yet the matter was not merely an attack on metaphysics, as radical as any from the heirs of Wittgenstein; it was also an attack on the possibility of any theoretical knowledge about politics and society, and sprang from a complete scepticism that any political doctrines can have any philosophical foundation. Here was something beyond the fringe of normal conservative experience.

His reputation has been esoteric: one big book of highly abstract, synthetic philosophy in the mode of Bradley, largely unread—*Experience and Its Modes* (1933); an anthology called *Contemporary Political Thought* (with the most perfunctory of introductions); the *Guide to the Classics* (of horses, not books); an introduction to an edition of Hobbes' *Leviathan* (a classic case of an Introduction which should be taken afterwards); and a handful of biting polemical essays in the former *Cambridge Journal*. But now that he has published his major essays, with

[1] *Rationalism in Politics*. By MICHAEL OAKESHOTT. Methuen, 35s.

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even a few new ones, it is puzzling to see how reviewers have missed the point. Mr. David Marquand handled him gingerly and respectfully, in the new *New Statesman*, as a most intelligent type of modern Conservative; it was the turn of the *T.L.S.* to turn loose a nameless Crossman-like animus (such brave anonymity!), predictable as ever, accusing him of being a conservative; and Mr. Henry Fairlie steadied the drifting *Spectator* to hail Oakeshott as the high priest of modern Conservatism.

But Oakeshott's scepticism far transcends anything that can be called, in any possible party sense, "Conservative"—and he has never sought such a label. If labels there must be, for quick readers and sluggish thinkers, he is Tory not Conservative, and if Tory, then, as Orwell once called Swift, "a Tory anarchist". He calls into question, with a profundity that neither polemic nor praise has done justice to, not merely the arbitrariness of all reformist thought (of all attempts to demonstrate objective "needs" which "must be realised"), but also the basic character of the ideas of that modern, Western, reformist, revisionist-Christian, technological civilisation which normal conservatives and normal socialists like to say "we have in common". Oakeshott's account of politics at least has nothing in common with all those who believe that "we must believe in certain fundamentals" in order to survive at all.

Now it is not always easy to be clear exactly what Oakeshott is saying. Partly, this is his own fault. He is so sure that he will be misunderstood that he often seems to welcome it: so that he can always find more fools to mock (particularly would-be disciples). Partly, it is a matter of the famous style. It is so full of tricks and whimsy, breath-taking leaps from the baroque to the colloquial, swift symphonic changes of cadence, verbal paradox and unlikely metaphor, that it becomes an end in itself. His is not, to speak mildly, a "propositional prose"; it is often unclear where the weight should lie in the many assertions and witty qualifications of the very long sentences. And he speaks in at least three different voices. Although attacking all modernity, he does *live* in the modern world (his address is in the phone-book) and part of him tries to revive the grand manner of the Tory pamphleteers of the age of Wellington and Eldon. But then there is reflection about the silliness of seriousness in a world of, at times, delightful vanity—all this is in the tone of the Dandy, and the appeal is made (as in *The Voice of Poetry in the Conversation of Mankind*), in politics, morals and art, to the connoisseur against the expert. Oakeshott, like Proust's Swann, if directly challenged for an opinion will say something erudite, but tantalisingly less than half-relevant. There is also a philosophical voice which asks for reasons for so many good things which so many people take for granted, and then insinuates, with a gentle sharpness, that there can be no reasons for acting in these ways save that other people have already done so. The heart of his formal philosophy, in *Experience and its Modes* (a greatly underestimated book), was an attempt to deny that Cartesian distinction between subject and object, observer and observed, fact and value, and to show that there is only a total flow of experience, from which we make some arbitrary "arrests" and call them modes of knowing, but must indeed know them to be arbitrary. If, then, the only distinctions that can be drawn are between levels of experience —the more abstract and general, or the more concrete and limited—then he certainly practises what he preaches. The philosopher Oakeshott, the dandy-aesthete and the Tory Blood all jostle and mingle with each other in everything he writes. They do not aim to contradict each other; they are simply—in his favourite metaphor of the human condition—holding a conversation together. Only fools and ill-bred people, he tells us, confuse conversation with argument (argument hopes, vainly, to reach conclusions).

He tells us in the Preface that his essays "although they do not compose a settled doctrine, they disclose a consistent style of disposition of thought". If we look for a doctrine, it certainly has not settled; and, in any case, for Oakeshott all doctrines are doctrinaire. But there were certain key concepts which might help us at least to understand better "our predicament" and "our misfortunes". First, there was "experience" itself, soon gaining the more precise and political modulation of "tradition"; this in turn gave way to the "character" of something, then simply to the "appropriateness" of one thing to another, now just—to cover all —"style or disposition". It is hard to see how he can achieve any higher abstraction without ceasing to converse publicly at all. The first is not contradicted by the last; he never repudiates or wholly abandons any of the subsequent concepts; the later ones are simply more comprehensive. And the substance is as fluid if we look at his gallery of errors: Rationalism, Collectivism, Technique, Liberalism (and, recently, the Vocational) all succeed each other as the *Enemy*, subsuming each other Hegel-like without superseding their predecessor.

Since all these published essays overlap in ascending spirals, or are variations on a theme,

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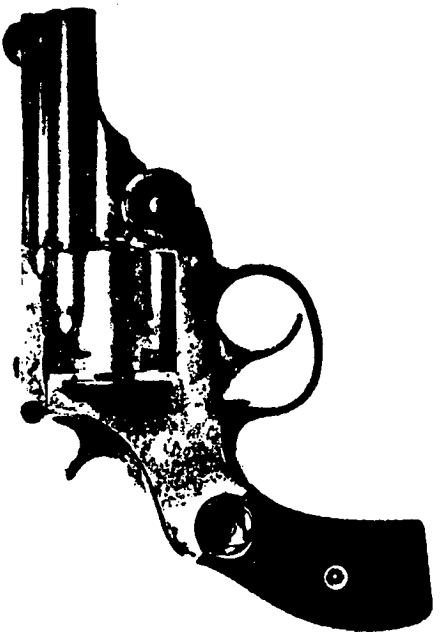
TUNES OF GLORY 1956
HOUSEHOLD GHOSTS 1961

James Kennaway
THE BELLS OF SHOREDITCH

This novel has, at its centre, the City. It concerns a young married couple and the influence on their lives, their morals and their marriage, of the husband's employer, J. T. Sarson, Chairman of a merchant bank. Stella, the young wife, aware that power can corrupt, nevertheless finds Sarson's vigour and generosity, his unassailability, dangerously attractive. As the result of Sarson's ambiguous activities in the City, she is brought face to face with the truth about herself and her marriage. It is a novel that is exciting, full of grave predicaments, topical and often very funny.
To be published in June 18s



TRAGEDY IN DEDHAM
Francis Russell

The story of the Sacco-Vanzetti case
"Its interest, literacy, and objectivity never falter. The account of the trial is about the most vivid piece of court presentation I have ever read. The ballistic evidence is exciting and certainly throws fresh doubt on the validity and justice of the whole proceedings." C. H. ROLPH
To be published in June 42s

Longmans

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it matters little which we examine in detail. Perhaps we may be impertinent and look at the most political of the essays—to examine his reputation as a conservative.

WHAT IS POSSIBLY the only simple factual assertion in the book is wrong. "Of these essays", begins the Preface (dated 1962), "composed during the last twelve years...." The first essay, "Rationalism in Politics" is dated 1947, and the second, "The Political Economy of Freedom" 1949. This is important, for the years of the Labour Government exhibit the part of Oakeshott which is simply—with not much philosophical nonsense about it— a brilliant Tory pamphleteer in the tradition of the *Edinburgh Review*, a man to thunder, bemoan, and squib with the best of them, firing volleys of red-hot shot at rival extremists, right above the heads of the centre. In the "Political Economy of Freedom" he calls himself a "libertarian" and rolls out best Burkean bluster: "With eyes focused upon distant horizons and minds clouded with foreign clap-trap, the impatient and sophisticated generation now in the saddle has dissolved its partnership with its past and is careful of everything except its liberty." Did anyone's flesh really creep at the Jacobinism of Major Attlee? This is clearly not the philosophical Oakeshott who shows that no one *can* break from tradition, but it is a Tory Oakeshott who castigates peoples for succeeding in breaking Burke's "great partnership". And more: "The government of a collectivist society can tolerate only a very limited opposition to its plans; indeed, that hard-won distinction, which is one of the elements of our liberty, between opposition and treason is rejected: what is not obedience is sabotage." Fortunately the order for his arrest got lost in the post. It all hangs together, but as a description of some other society. When he defines "collectivist" one sees how his style of Tory wrath gets in the way of scholarly discrimination: "Collectivism in the modern world... stands for a managed society, and its other titles are communism, national socialism, socialism, economic democracy and central planning." Here is a bizarre failure to draw distinctions, something on a level with Churchill's "Gestapo" polemic against Attlee.

Perhaps the book he happened to be reviewing was the first book of pure-liberal economics he had read. "The third object of this economic policy is a stable currency, maintained by an application of fixed and known rules and not by day-to-day administrative tricks. And that this belongs to the political economy of freedom needs no argument: inflation is the mother of servitude." There is no need to deny that the "fixed-money-crank" is a type of conservative, but he is a rather embarrassing one. So too was his "there is good reason for supposing that labour monopolies are more dangerous than any others"—all good blunt party stuff. But what was extraordinary—for a "libertarian"—was a sudden swing at the conventional importance of "freedom of speech", the "extraordinary emphasis" upon which was simply the self-interest of a "small vocal section" of society!

> ... under the influence of misguided journalists and cunning tyrants, we are too ready to believe that so long as our freedom to speak is not impaired we have lost nothing of importance—which is not so. However secure may be a man's right to speak his thoughts, he may find what is to him a much more important freedom curtailed when his house is sold over his head by a public authority, or when he is deprived of his leasehold because his landlord has sold out to a development company, or when his membership of a trade union is compulsory and debars him from an employment he would otherwise take.

It sounds as if our philosopher was having trouble with his lease. People may certainly choose property-tenure before freedom of speech; but we know that in the long run they are always mistaken. Speech is liberty, and it is in fact so patent that no-one could ever take away "all else" and just leave us with our "mere" freedom of speech. Oakeshott knows that. But his abhorrence of mere sincerity, unless it has a cranky colour to it, extends even to "freedom." Perhaps, if all this deserves to be remembered at all, it does not deserve to be taken very seriously, except as an illustration of the varying levels on which Oakeshott can write.

THE ESSAY which should frighten Conservatives most (and was probably intended to do so), is "On Being Conservative" (1956). Here is a more calm and measured mocking at things than the angry, bitter tone of the essays in the late 1940s when Oakeshott saw the hand of tyranny already upon us. The basic theme is clear and convincing; it concerns the character of politics as an activity, not the appropriateness of any type of politics. The "conservative" and the "politician" are virtually identified: men who reject the pursuit of premeditated goals, and see politics as the wise management of affairs and tendencies already at hand or afoot.

> Coming to be at home in this commonplace world qualifies us (as no knowledge of "political science" can ever qualify us), if we are so inclined and have nothing better to think about, to engage in what the man of conservative disposition understands to be political activity.

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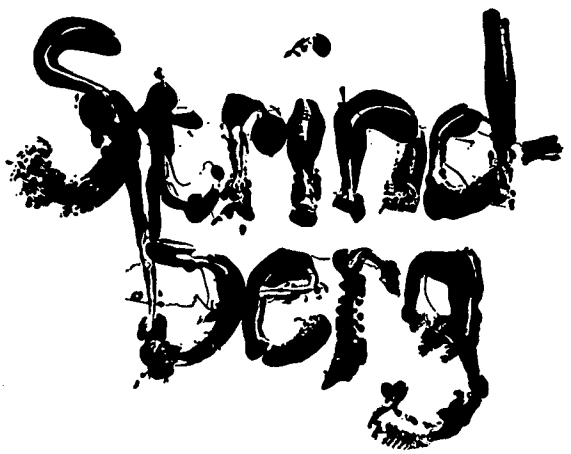

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may be held to be desirable, but it is simply not politics; certainly the methods of utopians are rarely political. This is an admirable breath of human warmth in a subject—as Oakeshott often points out—whose very vocabulary of description is often rotten with moralistic rhetoric of aspiration. But why the jejune cynicism of "nothing better to think about"? Plainly, anything we can mean by "being at home", or civilised, depends (for all his fear of sincerity and earnestness) upon some distinction between acting politically and acting ideologically. Politics, for this reason, is the "master-science" still. But Oakeshott means what he says: politics is not very important.

> But further, there are activities, not involving human relationships, that may be engaged in, not for a prize, but for the enjoyment they generate, and for which the only appropriate disposition is the disposition to be conservative. Consider fishing. If your project is merely to catch fish it would be foolish to be unduly conservative. You will seek out the best tackle, you will discard practices which prove unsuccessful, you will not be bound by unprofitable attachments to particular localities, pieties will be fleeting, loyalties evanescent; you may even be wise to try anything once in the hope of improvement. But fishing is an activity that may be engaged in, not for the profits of a catch, but for its own sake; and the fisherman may return home in the evening not less content for being empty-handed. Where this is so, the activity has become ritual and a conservative disposition is appropriate. Why worry about the best gear if you do not care whether or not you make a catch? What matters is the enjoyment of exercising skill (or, perhaps, merely passing the time), and this is to be had with any tackle, so long as it is familiar and is not grotesquely inappropriate.

Has this anything specifically to do with politics? The metaphor seems to embrace all of human life. It may give some comfort to some, none to others; appear realistic to some, romantic to others. It is a pretty picture that we may take or leave as we choose. But Oakeshott thinks it does have a kind of relevance. There is a footnote on the same page (the first of several Chinese tales) about a Prince who makes just such a fisherman a minister; he fears criticism, but "he could not bear to think of the people being deprived of his influence." Oakeshott is not merely characterising politics in general, he is saying that the best politics, broadly speaking, does nothing—or is it that it may do anything, except things "grotesquely inappropriate"? A minimum criterion for political management is being insinuated, but no objective tests, standards, or conditions are even hinted at. The magic word "appropriate" is simply conjured with (three times even in this short passage). One either knows what is appropriate, or one has no business fishing, playing politics, or anything else. This is the great half-truth. "Being a conservative" is usually the most appropriate disposition in politics. Each human reader must judge for himself whether this is wisdom or banality. But doesn't theoretical knowledge, which Oakeshott rejects in politics, at least make some attempt to explain in which situation it is possible to govern politically, and in which not?

So to be a conservative is not to have a doctrine, but simply a disposition—which will not always be appropriate. Consider how his style of writing leads us to think that such a naked conclusion is in fact well dressed:

> But, beside the not inconsiderable class of activities which we can engage in only in virtue of a disposition to be conservative, there are occasions in the conduct of other activities when this is the most appropriate disposition; indeed there are few activities which do not, at some point or other, make a call upon it. Whenever stability is more profitable than improvement, whenever certainty is more valuable than speculation, whenever familiarity is more desirable than perfection, whenever agreed error is superior to controversial truth, whenever the disease is more sufferable than the cure, whenever the satisfaction of expectations is more important than the "justice" of the expectations themselves, whenever a rule of some sort is better than having no rule at all, a disposition to be conservative will be more appropriate than any other; and on any reading of human conduct these cover a not negligible range of circumstances.

Again, that gentlemanly, indolent word, "appropriate". Notice also the love of incantatory repetition, and then of antithetical abstractions, some profound, some playful, some banal, some intended simply to shock (and would shock moralistic conservatives most of all). All are capable of almost any interpretation; there is rarely if ever a concrete example, though the demand that things should be made "concrete" is a favourite Oakeshottian edict. These antitheses do not contain genuine alternatives, they are all words. Is knowledge simply a matter of defining things cleverly (indeed, in such a way that no sane man would ever make such choices)? The formula is this: "whenever so-and-so sensible is preferred to such-and-such silly, that is what I mean by being conservative."

There is never any discussion of whether one thing is intrinsically preferable to another. There are no principles; it is all a matter of analogy from previous experience (and if you have no previous experience, bad luck Jack, try again in three generations' time). There is never any discussion of how we recognise an appropriate analogy, or of how we recognise that something

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has ceased to be its abstract self and has become an inappropriate abstract something-else. No, it is all a matter of just knowing, by the right sort of habits or by "intimations from tradition", the right sort of analogy. Also look at the number of double-negatives in this passage: the "not inconsiderable", "few . . . which do not", and "not negligible". In themselves they are a rather comic fusion of the Hegelian "negation of negation" with the academic or "speech day" prose of the English upper class and their servants. More than that, a double-negative serves to create depth, mystery or disqualification where there is none; it puts the mask of modest tentative conversation over what is, in fact, the arrogance of unexplained assertion. May one not share his love of alliterative prose, without thinking that plain clarity of meaning need so often be sacrificed to the appropriately assonant adjective?

The two passages I have quoted at length do raise the suspicion of self-parody. Oakeshott's scepticism goes very deep. Perhaps all this was a deliberately strong whiff of Oakeshott to punish some young Tories for having asked him to be serious and partisan about politics. Was it the irony of humanism or of absolute negation? *"Ich bin der Geist, der stets verneint"*. Probably even the author does not know; he must delight in the ambiguities and unexpected utterances of his own pen. He writes of public affairs like a poet waiting to see what the Muses have sent him. The result is cold comfort for Conservatives. He is a Tory all right, but a too High Tory to touch mere politics.

DEFINITIONS of "the Rationalist" abound. Oakeshott is as prodigal in defining his great fallacies as he is coy and chaste in defining those few concepts which might offer us some even pale and frail guides to conduct—Tradition, Character, Appropriateness, etc. "The myth of rationalist politics" is the "assimilation of politics to engineering. . . . The politics it inspires may be called the politics of the felt need. . . . They are the politics of perfection, and they are the politics of uniformity. . . ." Rationalism confuses practical knowledge with technical knowledge. "Technical knowledge can be learned from a book; it can be learned in a correspondence course. . . . Now, I have suggested that the knowledge involved in every concrete activity is never solely technical knowledge." But, one is tempted to ask, who has ever thought that the knowledge involved in every concrete activity is solely technical knowledge? Perhaps a few people with reputable credentials have, from Bacon (in some moments) to Harold Lasswell (in nearly all). In the main it has not been a scholarly view, but a plain man's

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speculation. This is not to say that Oakeshott's Rationalist is entirely made of straw. One of the odd, rather paradoxical, strengths in Oakeshott's writings is that, amid all his cultivated idiosyncrasies, there are flashes of a common touch, an appreciation of the importance of common modes of thought usually ignored by academics. People do think like his picture of the rationalist. The question is, do they ever act like it consistently? and can they ever act with his converse "pure practicality"? Suppose we say, all right, the knowledge is *never* purely technical, but always part and part? What happens to the problem then? One sees what happens when he does come down from building analytical Aunt-Sallies to give concrete examples:

> The project of the so-called Re-union of the Christian Churches, of open diplomacy, of a single tax, of a civil service whose members "have no qualifications other than their personal abilities", of a self-consciously planned society, the Beveridge Report, the Education Act of 1944, Federalism, Nationalism, Votes for Women, the Catering Wages Act, the destruction of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the World State (of H. G. Wells or anyone else), and the revival of Gaelic as the official language of Eire, are like the progeny of Rationalism.

The conclusion is inescapable that Rationalism is, at least, unavoidable. Some rationalism (and some traditionalism) will enter into any political judgment, into any appreciation of the activity of governing a complex State. If it is, then, a matter of degree, let us talk about "when too much" and "when too little" in concrete terms—and stop banging these absolutes about the hall (especially when one does not believe in them). Oakeshott, the sceptical Hegelian, insists, for some quirkish reason, on attacking metaphysics in its own vocabulary. He does not believe in such categories himself (his wise self); but he believes, with modest arrogance, that almost everyone else does. What is plainly needed is a discussion, not of "reason," but of what people think of as being a *reasonable* way of conducting various activities and of making decisions; and discussion not of "reason in ethics" but of "reasoning in ethics." If a decision has to be made (though this is pressing a proper Oakeshottian very far), how can we say that there is a rational way of going about it? Are there not simple rational things to do, like reading the evidence, reading it again, warily consulting "experts"? Time may not allow, but what when it does? If one presses some of Oakeshott's examples historically, the appropriateness of "Rationalism" crumbles. Where is an example of "Federalism" ever having been a preconceived plan? Who carts around Federalism as an *a priori* panacea? Federalism has always appeared in any actual situation as a response to an *existing* division of power within a territory that comes together, or is thrust together, as one State. This should be a good, if obvious, Oakeshottian point about tradition. How, then, can it be at the same time an example of Rationalism?

Tradition itself suffers in Oakeshott from a similar excess of generality. The concept that "moral and political 'principles' are abridgements of traditional manners of behaviour" (not external criteria of conduct), is a good corrective to the Rationalist who thinks that he is both right and novel. It is easy to show that he is rarely, if ever, novel (though there may be some circumstances, as Machiavelli argued, in which it is simply not possible to follow custom and the established laws). But the objection is obvious that, on a practical level, there may be several traditions in any one society. On a philosophical level, to speak of *a* tradition is either an arbitrary abridgement of all the activities within a society, or some assumption about "minimum law and order" (High Toryism in anthropological dress). Or else "tradition" means the "total situation," in which case his whole use of the concept founders between tautology and truism. Oakeshott has defended himself (in an addition to the original essay on "Political Education") by saying that he is considering "a legally organised society . . . the manner in which its legal structure (which in spite of its incoherencies cannot be supposed to have a competitor) is reformed and amended." The sudden faith in law is odd enough. But he has already defined a "single community" in terms of sharing a tradition: "To suppose a collection of people without recognised traditions of behaviour . . . is to suppose a people incapable of politics." Yet there are people seemingly incapable of politics. Certainly there are communities in which very few people are involved in public life. Are these, then, not really "communities," is it not really "politics," or can there be either without tradition? I have argued in a recent book, starting from precisely this confusion or dilemma in Oakeshott, that what holds some communities together is a rational appreciation of the advantages of doing things politically rather than, for instance, by pure force, by total plan, or by just trying to "keep afloat."

But whether tradition is one or many, the fundamental dilemma in Oakeshott's view of the world is now, with all his major essays before us, apparent. Whether or not tradition simply describes how communities hold together, or whether it asserts the best conservative way of doing so, on either view tradition

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must surely have some historical content. We may not be able to reduce it to a descriptive catalogue, but it must have a history. The agony is that this history is itself rationalistic. I used to think that the Americans were a sufficient stumbling-block to Oakeshott's concept of tradition—their thriving tradition of anti-traditionalism; it is now clear why he does not worry about such a trifling, concrete, contrary example: for he sees the whole of European history as exhibiting that rationalism which most European conservatives have seen in America. At heart Oakeshott is condemning, like a gentlemanly anti-Christ, the whole moralistic, reformist, activist tradition of Western thought. The most obvious characteristic of Western thought—the belief that conscious political action can lead to human progress—is to him detestable. Not merely poetry should be seen only as a subject for "contemplation and delight," but life itself. No wonder the number of little quietistic Chinese anecdotes. For he affects a literary oriental conceit of culture in which everything is rejected unless it serves the pure end of contemplation.

The root of the trouble is, of course, *Christianity*:

> But, whatever was the impulse of the change, it appears that by the middle of the 3rd century there existed a Christian morality in the familiar form of the self-conscious pursuit of moral ideals [bad thing]. . . . A Christian morality in the form of a way of life [good thing] did not, of course, perish, and it has never completely disappeared. But from this time in the history of Christendom a Christian habit of moral behaviour (which had sprung from the circumstances of Christian life) was swamped by a Christian moral ideology, and the perception of the poetic character of human conduct was lost.

When even Nietzsche is turned upside down—Christianity is condemned, not for being a "slave morality," or for preaching weakness and humanity, but, on the contrary, for activism—the reader will see why there is something special about Oakeshott. He records that

> Rationalism has ceased to be merely one style in politics and has become the stylistic criterion of all respectable politics [and that] the politics of Rationalism are the politics of the politically inexperienced, and that the outstanding characteristic of European politics in the last four centuries is that they have suffered the incursion of at least three types of political inexperience —that of the new ruler, of the new ruling class, and of the new political society.

Can there be any wonder at the tone of bitterness and despair? If so bad in Europe, how much worse elsewhere? (And how irrelevant are these categories elsewhere!) Tradition is the only

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possible guide for us, but its roots are hopelessly tainted.... with faith, hope, and charity. And perhaps this is why, after all these years, scattered essays are published, and not a great masterpiece on the character of European politics. For, clearly, if all "illusions" and pursuits of the ideal and "new men" were stripped away, there would be nothing left: a kind of suicide of the man, the book, the subject, and the tradition. The anarchical Tory becomes a lonely nihilist. We cannot by giving thought add a cubit to our stature, but we can find reasons to defend and improve the moral, activist, reforming tradition of European politics.

Oakeshott is right that politics is not the grasping of an ideal; for there are many ideals among which true politics must mediate. But it is itself a moral activity which will have to invent and engineer when tradition fails. The advice to "consult tradition" is too partial. When Oakeshott looks narrowly, he means conservative England (which is narrow enough); and when he looks widely, we need other help since he himself shows that our entire Western culture is rotten with rationalism, thank God. Are we so unfortunate? Should we be so reconciled to our misfortunes? Oakeshott's counsel wavers between conservatism and nihilism. He must prune his rhetoric before he deserves to be understood, but he must draw distinctions before he can hope to be understood. Perhaps he does not hope to be. If not, why write?

Poetry & Exegesis

The Visionary Company, a Reading of English Romantic Poetry. By HAROLD BLOOM. *Faber & Faber*, 36s.

THIS IS ONE of the most difficult books I have ever read: harder than *Romans* and ten times harder than Aristotle. In such a case vanity whispers that the fault lies with the author: prudence and the desire to be just ask whether it may not be one's own. Perhaps the best I can do is to cite a few of the expressions which puzzled me and leave the reader to judge.

"They perform for us the work of the ideal metaphysician or therapeutic idealist, which is the role our need has assigned to the modern poet." Have we here two alternative characterisations of the same work or two works of which a poet must do one or the other? Is a therapeutic idealist one who heals by idealism or one who is idealistic about healing? And in what sense is *idealist* used? "The apocalyptic ambition . . . is to humanise nature and to naturalise the imagination." Naturalising the imagination might surely mean a good many different things. "Poems of iconic response." Response to images (and images in what sense?) or a response (to something or other) which expresses itself in images? "Awakening from experience into a visionary reality." But if the vision is experienced, those who achieve it have not emerged from experience. If not, the process is surely to be described not as wakening but as losing consciousness? "An imagination... so predicated against the Harlot Mystery." I can make no sense at all of *predicated* in this context.

Sometimes by a small emendation I can hammer out a meaning, but I don't know for sure whether it is Mr. Bloom's. "The Miltonic belief that the sexual entrance was wider, was in fact an entire body entering into an entire body." The natural implication of *was* is "used to be, but isn't now"; and since *Paradise Lost* is all about a great change in the nature of man, the suggestion is irresistible. But then Milton says nothing of the sort about pre-Lapsarian copulation between humans. In the previous paragraph, however, Mr. Bloom has been talking about angelic amours ("total they mix"). I can therefore make sense if I emend *was* to "is for creatures extremely different from us." But if that is what he meant, how could he have written *was*?

Sometimes the difficulty is that Mr. Bloom seems to be saying what is simply untrue about matters of fact which he must know perfectly well. Thus we are told that the Ancient Mariner "is a haunter of wedding feasts." I can find no evidence for this in the text. An impulse points out to him the man to whom he must tell his story, and the particular hearer on this occasion happens to be a wedding-guest. The Mariner's own preference (which anyway has nothing to do with the matter) is "a goodly company" going to an ordinary service.

The book is occupied almost entirely with exegesis; with expositions of what various poets have to say abstracted from the poetry itself. Mr. Bloom is not to be blamed if, in such treatment, the very great differences of poetic achievement between the works he deals with slip out of sight. It can't be helped. If the exegesis is correct, it may in the long run do more than criticism to promote good reading.

The first and largest study is of Blake. Mr. Bloom is very anxious to separate him from occult tradition and "the swamps of Neoplatonism": the names of Porphyry, Taylor, and Kathleen Raine do not appear in his index. He finds in Blake many ironies which have not, I think, been seen before.

To my mind Blake overshadows the rest of the work too much. I think Mr. Bloom sees the other romantics far too much in terms of

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the anthroposophy (so to call it) he found in Blake. Hence, while his exegesis of Blake, if correct, clarifies Blake's poems, his exegesis of the *Prelude* seems to me to make dark what was clear enough already.

Mr. Bloom thinks better than I of *Laodamia* as poetry; yet to call the ghost "a puritan" and to speak of "denied sensuality" is surely to misunderstand. The ghost, because he is a ghost, can never give his wife what she wants. It is death, not Wordsworth, that denies sensuality. This poem, like the *Comedy* and *Pearl*, arises from taking seriously the belief in transmortal life. All three poets are too mature for the consolatory fantasy that this could simply restore an old happiness unchanged. Beatrice turns from Dante *all'eterna fontana*. The father-child relation is as ruthlessly transformed in *Pearl* as eroticism is in *Laodamia*. We accept the negation in Dante because it is swallowed up in the glowing and positive vision at the end. We can make shift to endure it in *Pearl* because the New Jerusalem is something more than an abstraction. But poor Wordsworth has nothing to set against it but "moral babble." He has attempted a task hopelessly beyond his powers.

In *Kubla Khan* surely *momently* ("a mighty fountain momently was forced") must mean not "momentarily," as Mr. Bloom wants, but "moment by moment"? How else could it resemble "fast thick pants"? And "the thresher's flail" also suggests repetition.

C. S. Lewis

After the Storm

Reappraisals in History. By J. H. Hexter. *Longmans*, 30s.

This volume gives many pleasures. First, the pleasure of reading. For vigorous wit and sound English, John Hexter (to use the unfamiliar Christian name on the spine) takes some beating. There are passages which make one laugh out loud: this does not happen very often in reading an important book. And the importance of this book materially adds to enjoyment, for history books of significance are fairly uncommon. It also deals with the good and the great and the successful practitioners as if they were human, an entertaining exercise and one that has all but passed away, as historians, almost all of whom are now in the same academic galley, primly try not to rock the boat. When was the last historical controversy before the "Storm over the Gentry"? And was there ever before one which produced combatants so nicely matched in intelligence and literary ability—figures almost as brightly shining as the Hexter who stilled the storm; and by pouring on the waters not oil, but a bucketful of logic.

The "Storm over the Gentry" article is now printed with full apparatus, as it could not be when it first came out in Encounter in 1958. It remains a solid and sensible piece of work, well worth re-reading. Now that the duller work of counting Tudor and Stuart heads and calculating income has gone still further in articles and monographs it is clearer even than it was then that pretty well all one can say about the gentry in the 16th century is that some are going up and some are going down. What remains puzzling to the outsider is why this ingenuity has been and still is being expended on the period from the 1540s to the 1640s. Why not earlier? Surely one must face the fact that the only long-term investment open was land, so that all who prospered, whether by land itself or war or trade or office, tended in the nature of things to become gentry. The Wife of Bath's modest ambition was to be First Lady in her parish. But the moment she put her savings into a couple of green fields she might well have condemned herself or her children to climb quite another social ladder; in the Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* it is not the Knight who had been knight of the shire in Parliament, but the Franklin. If one got on at all in the later middle ages or the early modern period, one could hardly avoid ending up as a gentleman. Staying there was another matter.

Similar reflections are provoked by another of Hexter's essays, on the myth of the middle class in Tudor England. When simple souls apply the expression "middle class" in centuries earlier than the 18th, they are often unaware that they are playing with the dialectic of history, and liable to be sharply accused by orthodox Marxists of an immature and unscientific eclecticism. It is nevertheless almost part of the canon of Tudor history. Those of us who "did the Tudors" at school thirty years ago (or five years ago?) need to remember that here too we have a notion that must be defined; otherwise we are again chasing our tails—the middle class all too easily becomes all those who gained power and influence in the 16th century. As Hexter says, "the reasoning here might find critics among finicking logicians" and his demonstration of the fortunes of the *bourgeoisie* and of the paternalistic attitude of Tudor sovereigns to this class is a masterly exercise in common sense. There are complications here which one would have liked Hexter to explore. To treat the English *bourgeoisie* in isolation from other groups can distort; there was no *tiers état* in England but a constitutionally undifferentiated Commons, and

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at moments of crisis the burgesses and the knights of the shire do not pull different ways. Indeed by insisting as he does on the mercantile instincts to be found among landed magnates and gentry Hexter is really reinforcing this point. Yet if there were men of middle rank and of middle wealth in town and country we cannot solve their problems by indiscriminately labelling them middle class. The term can be useful when describing the antagonisms of urban groups—as in London or Florence in the 14th and 15th centuries. Its general employment is question-begging: "class" is not a category in which men saw themselves at the time.

IT WAS POLLARD who was mainly responsible for tending this sociological plant until it spread its tendrils into the whole of Tudor and Stuart history, and to Pollard's *Factors in Modern History* Hexter devotes a third aggressive paper, hitherto unpublished though enjoyed by a large number of people as a lecture when the author was in Britain a year ago. Hexter (I suspect) admires Pollard enormously: they share certain talents. If we are "still debtors to A. F. Pollard ... for his holocaust of historical idols," this book is itself a fair-sized bonfire of the same materials. The middle class goes up in flames, as we have seen, and so does the Nation State under the New Monarchy. It will, of course, take time before the textbooks are re-written and the teachers re-taught in the light of the smouldering pyre. I have a view of the 16th century in my head which was put there by a brilliant schoolmaster—who in turn had learned his history when progress had a capital *P*. I may conscientiously try to clear away old concepts and build new ones, but I build on a site encumbered with the ruins of an earlier and more optimistic age. Then the Reformation was an inevitable turning-point, Wolsey pursued a policy of balancing power, the dissolution of the monasteries enriched crown and country, and high adventure sharpened the brisk Elizabethan air. Unthinking all this and more has for many of us been a hard job.

Hexter's essay on Pollard is not just a rumbustious contribution to this de-mythologising, for, having knocked down, he constructs. Some of the most valuable of the pages in this volume are those in which he sketches a few of the genuine choices before the men and women of 16th-century England. The choices before a man involved in public life are almost endless, but Hexter's list of the important ones in the 16th century opens up a way of getting a three-dimensional view. His list of "polar pairs" is: Catholic/Protestant—Church/State—*Realpolitik*/legitimacy—dynasty/region—court/country. One can quarrel with the terms and even dispute

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whether these in fact include all the important alternatives. (What about choices in the fields of education and art?—above all, what about that primary decision—between sticking your neck out at all or keeping quiet about everything?) But the notion is a valuable one, provided one does not range the dilemmas rigidly. Such an over-rigid formulation, as Hexter says, has produced the identification of Protestantism with State, with the forward march of Man. In practice the muddle is often complete. A Protestant may well turn out to be an aristocratic courtier, clinging to the shadow of a united Christendom, loyal to old ideas and to an established monarch. And a Catholic can be ruthless, innovating, empirical—champion of the overriding claims of administration.

THE MESSY ALTERNATIVES of public life in our own day are evident enough. Crossed allegiances, confused programmes, are an everyday thing, even if not all socialists are public school men and not all Tories trade unionists. The divisions over the Suez affair transcended all predictable political and ideological patterns; so do reactions to the Bomb and the Common Market. The infinitely complex relationships within any group from the family or the school to the Commons or the U.N. are so clearly present as to prevent all but a handful of journalists from writing history, as in theory it can be written, the day after it happens. Indeed this awareness of intricacy and involvement makes so-called "contemporary history" (the last twenty years or so) uncommonly hard work for writer and reader. Yet in earlier times varieties of decision only a shade less numerous lay before our ancestors, which are tidily swept up into paragraphs, chapters, and books, so that the past is simplified to the point of caricature.

The most exciting part of being a historian is exactly that: putting the muddle back into history, and doing it, if possible, in a non-muddled way. This sounds easier than it is. The muddle of actuality has to be broken up into sectors for analysis. Usually this is done by the exhaustive examination of some particular institution or activity over a longish period. Hexter calls such work "tunnel history" in his "Personal Retrospect and Postscript," the last piece in the volume, in which he outlines his mature view of the historian's task. By tunnels he means the burrowing through the story of particular problems: diplomatic, political, institutional, ecclesiastic, art, agriculture, and so on, "practically self-contained at every point and sealed off from contact with or contamination by anything that was going on in any of the other tunnels." The upshot of such an approach can be valuable, but it is hardly a picture of life in the round. Nor does it lend itself to the telling of a story, which is what the non-specialist with reason expects of a historian.

How can one tell a story and analyse at the same time? There is surely only one way, and that is to make one of the relationships analysed the centre round which the others are gathered. It is here that Hexter is, perhaps, less than fair to the hordes of historians who struggle on with the "factors" he condemns and the "relativism" he so acutely criticises.

Suppose he wants me to narrate a history of Europe. *All* of European history? Well—in the 15th and 16th centuries: "Europe from 1378 to 1618." Why those dates? Take them away if you like, but they will stay as boundaries in my head. Now, do the chapters in my book *analyse* these centuries? If so, I give the reader glimpses down the tunnels. I have a chapter called "Nobles and Gentry," another "Peasantry." Other chapters deal with Clergy, Townsmen, Representative Institutions, Administration, Courts and Courtiers, Warfare, Patronage and the Arts, Scholarship, Literature, Spirituality. But what *happened*? asks the sixth-former. So in go several chapters called Politics, in which I try to sketch the public events revolving round the Lancastrians, Yorkists and Tudors, round Charles VII, Louis XI, Francis I and Henry IV, round Sigismund and Charles V; I must try to explain the events which led the kingdoms of Spain to dwindle from five to one or two in these centuries; and account for the absence of unity in Italy and Germany. "What happened" ought also to include what happened in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe and overseas in America and the East. Have I not written two books: an analysis of the new sort and a political history of the old sort, and put them between one set of covers? And, since I have given tacit approval to the primacy of politics, should not my book have been constructed round a core of political narrative?

The main device for concealing the dilemma which faces the historian as teacher or writer is the construction of just such a *dramatis personæ* as is the target of Hexter's wit: the story becomes the story of groups rather than men and women and before you know where you are you are saddled with a "rising" gentry or middle class (totally foreign to the period in question) and you have deserted history for sociology. Hexter is right to be sceptical of this. History, as Sidney said, "cannot be liberal of a perfect pattern." The alternative is to stress the central position in the story of one aspect of public life and it can scarcely be anything but politics, the hunt for power within any given

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society, even within a society like our own which has devised machinery for limiting the ways in which power may be obtained and exercised. At the end of the day, after a century of research in which we have witnessed the brilliant discoveries of Marxists, Toutists, and Namierites, I suspect we are nearly back to a kind of history that would not surprise Ranke or Stubbs: *res gesta*, where the *res* are *publica*.

If this is so, we will none the less be richer for the experience we have gone through and our understanding of politics will be deeper. It is in this sense that I disagree with Hexter's views on relativism. It seems to me that it is, in the last resort, true that each generation writes up the past in a way which makes it seem reasonable. What is politics for a 16th-century squire is not politics for a 19th-century Wesleyan coal-miner: and, if politics is to remain the centre of the story, it will be politics with a difference. A phenomenon like the Crusades, for example, can be discussed in terms of Christendom and Islam, or Pope and Emperor, or land-hungry younger sons of barons, or of a mass response to a certain psychological situation, and has been so treated successively over the last five hundred years. But each new explanation takes into account earlier ones and the total picture becomes more complicated and more like the infinitely complex realities of life itself. Our particular relativisms thus add up to something more than a series of hypotheses taken up and discarded. We should in the process become a great deal less bored not only with the past but also with the present; and since we can make some sense of the past we may, as I have said elsewhere, even indulge in a bit of confidence about the future. We in 1963 do not know what is going to happen: but then they did not know in 1863 or 863.

I DO NOT SEE HOW we can avoid making the story of government and politics the centre of the stage and, provided we treat it as a complex of all manner of tensions worthy of separate consideration, I do not think that such an attitude distorts the past more than is inevitable in any attempt to order disorder. And there is one tremendous safeguard, to which Hexter throughout this book draws our attention again and again: the *words* which are the historian's main entry into the spirit of earlier ages. It is incumbent on a historian to discuss the past in the terms of the past, and not to import into earlier periods the abstractions of a later day.

Over a wide range of terminology there is

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no danger, for the words of the past have died (*fief* and *allod*), have only a sentimental survival (*Christendom, escutcheon*) or, though still alive, can be given easily distinguishable meanings in earlier centuries (*knighthood, indenture*). But the corridors of time are thronged with *faux-amis* who can entice us into compromising situations: Parliament, Church, State, community, liberty—not to mention proper names like England, Scotland, France, charged with almost uncontrollable emotion. Historical semantics, the history of the shifts in the meanings of words, is one of the main ways in which a historian can remind himself of the horizons within which men of another age were confined, the boundaries which they regarded as attainable.

The other problem of words is the importation into the early modern period (or any period other than their own) of words which do not belong there: "to whom in that era can the term anarchist be applied, or the term agnostic?" I would in fact go much further than Hexter is prepared to do, for I do not see how, without much precise definition, one can assume that Catholicism, Protestantism, anti-clericalism, rationalism "quite clearly fit the early modern era as well as they do our own." In a sense all the *ism* words are suspect. We should try to ask ourselves what in 1400 or 1500 or 1600 an educated man would have said instead of anti-clericalism, for example. I believe an abstraction like this would disintegrate into a cluster of concrete cases. And as for Protestantism and Catholicism (imported into English in the mid-17th century), even if we scrape away the accretions of the 19th century, what genuine meaning have they in the age of Luther and Ignatius Loyola? Men argued about grace and vestments, about popes and presbyters; and if later concepts are to be employed we must indicate with extreme precision what the shorthand means.

Hexter's other essays here, well enough known to specialists, are on education in the 16th century, the Presbyterian Independents in the Commonwealth, and on the problem of a social history of England in terms of the Overmighty Subject. This last, like so much else in the book, is an attempt to provide a viable approach in place of the stultifying alternatives of the last thirty years: operating without any social framework ("to choose inaccuracy and incoherence in describing chaos") and Marxism ("to choose intelligibility and coherence in describing a myth, and then to baptise the myth as history").

This sane and generous book must be read by all who are interested in history. If non-historians read it, as they should, they will find that thinking about the past can be as absorbing a game as thinking about the present. Indeed I think it is the same game.

Denys Hay

Novels

Raise High the Roof beam, Carpenters & Seymour, an Introduction. By J. D. Salinger. *Heinemann*, 21s.

Pull Down Vanity and other Stories. By Leslie A. Fiedler. *Secker & Warburg*, 18s.

The Bender. By Paul Scott. *Secker & Warburg*, 18s.

An Answer From Limbo. By Brian Moore. *André Deutsch*, 21s.

I know that the sampling provided by the novels which come a reviewer's way cannot be impeccable. Nevertheless, after prolonged concentration on the crop of the last few months, I am driven irresistibly to certain generalisations.

Bums, beatniks, layabouts, and *layers* are still In, and as often as not their language is the simple monosyllables of the poor, as certified pure by recent changes in legislation, while their sex-behaviour continues to be behaviouristic and organ-conditioned. But another four-letter word, "love," keeps breaking in, and there is a feeling abroad that even sex should have something to do with it.

We are on a watershed between love and sex. It is a sharp one, and writers will wobble back and forth. And it is by no means certain that "love" will be either an artistic or a moral solution. For what the bums, beatniks, etc., also express is a weakness in the study of other relations, particularly work-relations, an inability to believe, perhaps, that interesting and significant lives might be found, or imagined, in the chinks of welfare-affluence. Work can be conceived only as soul-destroying. Hence among the bums, beatniks, etc., the chief professions are writing and painting. There are Workers, it is true: but mostly we are *shown* them working hardest at boozing and bed.

All these books are about economic outsiders: four have writers or painters as protagonists. Some of my generalisations may seem not to apply to Mr. Salinger, but that is because he is beatified beyond the beatnik. His book is certainly about writers and about "love" (although he does not much use this word, and the others of course not at all). He is high, high in the sky above the watershed, and

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appears by now to be nearly as old and wise as Beverley Nichols. And just as happy. Like God the Father he beams on his world which he is busy peopling with another creation; the Glasses—their seed, he warns us, is going to replenish the earth.

His book does not claim to be a unity (it came out as two pieces in the *New Yorker*): but it can be treated as one because both parts aim at an imaginative projection of Seymour Glass, by his younger brother Buddy. Seymour killed himself on his honeymoon, after eloping with the bride whom he had first left at the altar. The wedding is described by Buddy in an authentic *New Yorker* tone of homeopathic madness and is quite funny at that level. The rest is an attempt to "realise" Seymour, great poet and near-saint, a genuine "insider" at Zen Buddhism, and given to writing and talking Japanese and Chinese poetry in the original.

It is very difficult to create a poet and saint. And the penalty for failure is to look pretentious and sanctimonious. It causes here, too, some very horrid if patent trickery. Buddy can't illustrate Seymour's greatness because the poet's sister withholds the publishing rights! And all the time, Mr. Salinger is having his cake and eating it. (*This* (going on about Seymour) *embarrasses you? Well, it embarrasses me!*) Or, in other words, if I 'fess up, I'll get away with it.

I think this is a bad book; by that I mean that it is a wicked one. The author of *The Catcher in the Rye*, and even *For Esmé with Love and Squalor*, had perhaps the humility of an accepted limitation. This book is not only Holier-than-Thou (whoever Thou art) but Holier-than-thy-holiness. For Seymour/Salinger is higher up in both Zen and Tao than any poor beatniks. My own theory about this book is that it is a *Koan*, one of those cock-eyed Zen riddles which provide the formula for the anti-rational. How otherwise account for this sort of thing, a typical indication of Seymour's beatific happiness—"He threw it at her because she looked so beautiful"?

Mr. Fiedler's stories, including the longer (and better) in this volume, are also about writers, artists, layabouts, and the spiritually displaced, also drink and behaviouristic sex, with a background of the century's ideological worries as they hit writers (and gave them something to write about), anti-semitism, Thirtyish-leftishness. And with him also, the love-shaped hole is strongly visible. And an Eros-Thanatos ambivalence is marked. Perhaps on the Cana principle, the stories get better as they go on. And they get better because they are better written. In the earlier stories (they must, I think,

6

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be earlier in time as well as in placing) he is feeling his way round language like Henry James playing Blind Man's Buff. He seems to be trying so hard to transmute sensibility into description, to grab so much that he drops the lot on the floor. The later stories—particularly *Pull Down Vanity*, the title story, have greatly slimmed down in dialogue and movement. *Nude Croquet* is about a group of old friends who have a reunion at the castellated mansion of one of their number, a writer who has made an enormous pile. They are mostly between forty and fifty. In drink and boredom their young and bedworthy hostess incites them to play indoor croquet in the nude, knowing that they will all look terrible. This story is convincing, horrible, and moving. But I do not believe that these characters are all that usefully representative, any more than I believe that all over-forties without their clothing look like something left on a mortuary slab. I mean, writers, people who can use incantatory language, *could* look at other people who are really interested in love and freedom now and then, as well as at pill-, sex- and Zen-takers, and obsessive drunks who have nothing to pull but their chains.

In a good sense, I believe that Mr. Paul Scott and Mr. Brian Moore are both "professional" novelists. Mr. Scott is the better writer, with striking powers of description. This is not just a matter of atmospherics, nor is it description for description's sake. Nor is it *"chosisme,"* though the Things might sometimes appear to have a life of their own. It is sensibility, not metaphysics, and it is a way of unifying the London where his characters live, an underwater world with grim bus-drivers climbing "into their cabs like old crustacea into niches of subterranean rock."

In theory the book might be regarded as an ironically twisted offshoot from both Balzac and Austin, for it is a moral calculus of income —what would happen to a man with an income on which he can just live (£400 representing a capital of £10,000), without amenities, power, or any considerable security. This is an ingenious if artificial theme, and Mr. Scott makes the most of it, scanning a great variety of shades of status and creating a considerable range of economic eccentrics. Aunt Clara, Lady Butterfield, kidding herself that she is a *grande dame* with a salon, and talking to herself in cynical aphorisms on her tape-recorder to ease her loneliness, is almost touching. George, the leading character, is my layabout once more (though not even trying to write), and his £400 is, among other things, a way, both for himself and his creator, of avoiding the actual complexities of our dreary society. A limitation which here on the whole has been used artistically. George, too, discovers the importance of loving and of the freedom and integrity which wants others to be free and whole. In the end indeed the Scrooges melt and George is almost able to say "God bless us every one." A daringly sentimental conclusion, one might say, which might have been more convincing if the original situation had not been a little contrived.

Mr. Brian Moore's *An Answer from Limbo* makes the very most of the Russian egg situation, the writer (again) writing his novel within the novel. Brendan Tierney, Irish-American, learns about the need for loving, the hardest way, both for himself and everyone else. He sends his wife out to work, in the cause of his art, and imports his old Irish Catholic mother to look after the children, thus saving her remittance, a stroke of economy which is itself almost artistic. But his fundamentally selfish obsession is killing. Indeed it kills his mother and it kills his wife's love. The book has less sensibility than Mr. Scott's. In a curious way, that makes it more dramatic: more spare and active. It is only by the failure or death of love that Mr. Moore shows up the need for it: or even the awareness of the need: so that purely as a piece of action it is sadder and more convincing. For if most of these writers are saying, We must love one another or die, none of them has found a logic which leads to the first alternative.

Kathleen Nott

The Pink Decade

In the Thirties. By EDWARD UPWARD. Heinemann, 18s.

NOTHING seems to show the difference between generations more than the reception of this novel, the first of a trilogy. By most reviewers it has been treated rather dismissively as a simple-minded humourless autobiography which, if it had appeared thirty years ago, would have been noted as a promising effort by a young man. That the writer happens to be sixty and that the events he describes happened thirty years ago, evokes surprise.

It is perhaps the material with which Mr. Upward is dealing which makes this novel appear less contemporary than would a historical novel about some quite remote period. The Pink Thirties probably epitomise "datedness" for the present generation as the Naughty Nineties did for the generation of the 'thirties. Yet to me it still seems strange that Mr. Upward's account of his hero

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Alan Sebrill's Communist affiliations should appear naïve. I should have thought that with a novel so well written reviewers might have suspected a deeper irony in Mr. Upward's presentation of Alan's idolisation of the comrades than the facile kind which would in fact come natural to an autobiographic writer looking back disenchantedly on his past. Mr. Upward has thought it more important to confront the reader with the naïvety of his hero's feelings unvarnished than to adopt a superior attitude of hindsight towards them. But there are plenty of indications of irony which Mr. Upward commands and keeps in check: for example, in the love affair with Peg at the beginning of the novel, it is evident enough in very close physical descriptions like the following:

> He got through [the scullery window] and had to step into a slippery sink before putting his feet down on to the scullery floor. Having arrived there, he wondered whether this method of entry had been necessary, whether Peg hadn't wilfully chosen it for him because it seemed more romantic to her than letting him in by unbolting the back door.

One reason why this first volume of Mr. Upward's trilogy has been misunderstood may be due to what I think is a mistake which the writer may perhaps in the subsequent volumes at least partly retrieve. The mistake is that, although Alan's reasons for being a communist seem easy to accept when he has become one, his conversion to a materialist faith seems unconvincing and almost off-hand. He is in need of a faith, for the sake of his poetry, and contemplates joining the Roman Church. But "could he bring himself to go back not only on his grandparents but on the whole progressive intellectual movement which had begun with the Renaissance and the Reformation? Could he really prefer Cardinal Newman and Manley Hopkins to Godwin and Shelley?" Against this, when he thinks about being a communist he reflects, "But he mustn't join the Communist Party solely in order to be able to write poetry.... He must join the Party for its own sake, make it his supreme interest, set all his hopes on it." One can perhaps admire here the scrupulous avoidance of mention of any external reason for joining the Party, at a time when there seemed to be a good many, yet the flat and literalist presentation strikes here as a failure in depth. The situation requires at this point that the reader should *feel* what the novelist thinks about his hero's use of the labels "progressive" and "reactionary."

But despite such lapses this book is about something much more serious and important than the "conflicts" between a liberal conscience and materialist ideology. What Mr. Upward is really involved with is the contrast between imaginative truth and materialist analysis—and with the question of whether poetic imagination has something after all more important to say about modern society even than politics. It is his serious preoccupation with this theme which makes some of his readers wait very eagerly for the next volumes.

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FROM THE OTHER SHORE

Will Capitalism and Communism Spontaneously Converge?

THE IDEA in the title is very much in the air, though I find it difficult to trace back to a specific source, let alone a scholarly or reliable source. At one extreme it must have been in the mind of Dr. Adenauer, who is said to have astonished his interlocutor thus: "My dear Mr. Khrushchev, in 100 years there will be no talk any more of capitalism and socialism." At the other, every Sovietologist who takes part in adult education must have met this notion in question time.

Perhaps it is above all an American idea—and very naturally so, for otherwise the Cold War is presumably permanent, and Atlas will never lay down his weary load. When Professor Wassily Leontief returned from Moscow, hints of this kind appeared in *Business Week* (13 June, 1959), but one looks in vain for such ideas in Leontief's own article[1] on his visit. More explicit statements are made by another authority, David Granick, in his *Red Executive* (N.Y. 1960), and these are often quoted. Yet on examination he did not quite say what he is supposed to have said, and anyway even what he did say is surely not right.[2] The thesis has certainly reached lecture form, but not I think print, at Harvard.

But priority in time must go to the Titoists. The convergence thesis has long been the explicit ideological basis of Yugoslav foreign policy. Indeed, no ordinary American has anything like the psychological need of a Marxist schismatic for this belief. For if at the end of history is written Peaceful Convergence in letters of bronze, one's own schism is not treachery. Just the contrary, the Cold War and the Warsaw Pact and the Iron Curtain are acts of sectarian adventurism. "Yugoslav foreign policy," said an unidentified Titoist diplomat, "is what Soviet foreign policy ought to be." Of course the point of convergence is envisaged as somewhat farther to the left than in most American extrapolations.

Doubtless there are very many more sources. The thing is in the air, and we have seen that this is not at all surprising. With so much appeal to wishful thinking, the "convergence thesis" needs a most searching examination. Three reasons are commonly alleged in its favour.

The first may be called the strong case for convergence, and is based largely on predictions of American change: (1) that new rational methods of economic planning must eventually supersede both the free market and the arbitrary Stalinist system of *a priori* allocations. The other two are the weak case, and are based largely on predictions of Soviet change: (2) that reason must eventually triumph over dogma, or managers over ideologues, so as to make the policies of the leadership, if not similar, at least tolerant; and (3) that rich societies with a high level of mass consumption all tend to be, if not similar, again at least tolerant.

FIRST WE NOTE THAT the prophets of convergence are all optimists. If only the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. can avoid annihilating each other and humanity for a few decades, they say, the countries will grow so similar or at least so reasonable that hatred between them will cease. Now as far as (2) and (3) go this is fair enough, for a prediction of greater tolerance is *ipso facto* optimistic. But thesis (1) is by no means necessarily so. If dissimilarity is a sure cause of enmity, similarity is not a sure cure. If Albania and Yugoslavia, China and U.S.S.R. can hate each other with such passion it is at least not obvious that U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. will settle happily together after any degree of convergence. Nay, more, the hatred of Communist for Communist is as nothing compared with the hatred of Communist for Socialist. It is notorious that no class of human being is as rigorously persecuted as this latter in Communist countries; since no greater or subtler threat to Communist power can be conceived. Yet if the U.S. economy is going to move leftwards it is very hard to see the C.P.U.S.A. deriving any benefit; such a development must of course be under the aegis of democratic, reformist socialism. It would therefore quite certainly increase, not diminish, Communist antagonism; unless the Titoist tolerance of socialism (except of course in Yugoslavia) is transferred to other Parties. But of this there is no sign; for instance Moscow has given no sign at all of ideological compromise with, say, Touré, Nkrumah, Nasser or Soekarno. If it is more polite to them than in the past, that is of course because it hopes to dominate them. It is not more polite to domestic or West European socialists, whom it continues to hold irreconcilable.

Secondly, the convergence thesis tends to be applied to U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. alone. The mere mention of China, however, gives us pause. There is in fact a subordinate convergence thesis: that China is reproducing the historical stages of U.S.S.R. and will eventually become as rich and tolerant as she. We go briefly into this later; it is a reasonable thesis though far from inevitable, and current trends are of course starkly opposed to it. Lack of space forbids us to do more than mention the counterpart of this doctrine: that Western

PETER WILES, *the well-known British economist (now teaching in America) prepared this paper originally for the "Futuribles" group in Paris headed by Bertrand de Jouvenel: "...the intention is to conjecture what is probable; consequently the reader may not presume that a writer's prognostications represent his wishes...."*

[1] *Foreign Affairs*, Jan. 1960.

[2] Cf. my *Political Economy of Communism* (Oxford, 1962), p. 27.

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Europe, and such underdeveloped countries as remain capitalist, will similarly reproduce American development. Or since the whole convergence thesis is that the U.S. economic system will move to the "left," and the U.S. leadership become more tolerant, we may perhaps better say that it predicts a "Europeanisation" of U.S.A., extrapolated beyond its present point in Europe itself.

Thirdly, we must here assume without discussion further economic growth on both sides, at whatever speed.

NOW CONCENTRATING on (1), the "strong" convergence thesis, what are these new and more rational methods of planning? In economics the word "rational" has a very special meaning: it refers not to a whole cast of mind, as we shall refer to it when we turn to the "weak" thesis, but to a particular pre-occupation—that scarce resources be so allocated as to maximise outputs, and these outputs be so chosen as to maximise consumer satisfaction. In a broader sense this preoccupation may be "irrational," in that a delicately optimal adjustment of resource allocation is not an end in itself but also a means: one way among many to economic prosperity, and a way quite likely to conflict with others, such as a more just distribution of income, or a more rapid rate of economic growth. Indeed, so long as rational allocations could be obtained only by perfect competition on a free market the conflict was very great. For such rationality demanded very special and rather unattractive institutions: small businesses only, little government intervention or investment and a distribution of income resulting solely from the market. (Note that these small businesses might perfectly well be socialist: contrary to common opinion, capitalism, or the private ownership of the means of production, was never a pre-requisite for rational allocation.)

But the new mathematics of Leontief, Kantorovich, and Dantzig—and the rise of the computer—will one day change all this. Mankind now possesses the theory ("linear programming") whereby a perfect market may be imitated electronically; so that quite different economic institutions from those described will serve. Above all, central planning or, better, the so-called command economy can now be rationally conducted. Large enterprises, forced investment programmes, equal incomes, even centralised control, will no longer be obstacles to rational resource allocation. That equally unattractive institution, the bee-hive state, will also be able to achieve this end. The wasteful and arbitrary command economy imposed by Stalin is no longer the only kind possible. Moreover, the introduction of this kind of mathematics into the Soviet Union has shaken the Marxist theory of value to its base. Instead of labour alone, land and capital also must receive prices; scarcity is recognised as central to value; the margin and not the average is the crucial magnitude.

WE MUST INSTANTLY QUALIFY this picture in at least two ways. First, the problem of a rational command economy is only solved in theory. We have the mathematical procedures and we have the computers, but we are very far indeed from having the raw data. It will be a matter of several decades before the milliards of detailed orders can actually be issued. All this new branch of economics has as yet, for lack of data, scarcely any use above the level of the enterprise. Secondly, the new techniques do not prove a command economy superior to a perfectly competitive one, nor do they help us choose between the innumerable compromise models. Thus for instance why not have a genuine free market for current allocation decisions (the huge majority) and an electronic one for investment decisions alone? Or for "unimportant" and "important" decisions respectively? Or, best of all, let the line be drawn between those that do not and those that do involve external economies?[3] . . . The range of institutional choice has been widened; the situation is even less determinate than it ever was.

THIS FACT IS FATAL for convergence thesis (1). Let us speculate upon the variety of institutional effects the new techniques might have. In the U.S.A., "linear programming" may easily remain the tool of the Defence Department and the large capitalist corporations, making rapid calculations of what concerns their own operations. The federal government as such could simply refuse, on ideological or political grounds, to use the technique—a position it may be said to have already consciously taken up when we consider the contrast between its domestic attitude and its policy on foreign aid. For this government does not hesitate to assist, nay, to impose planning on foreign nations that receive its aid; behaviour of which it would not dream in the context of the home economy.

In, say, France on the other hand there might well be a state office superficially resembling the Gosplan; but then much of the stuff of parliamentary politics would be the insertion of this or that "tax," "subsidy" or "tariff" into the raw data upon which the computers fed. For there is little to threaten parliamentary democracy in an *efficient* command economy, *voluntarily* adopted and leaving the income and property structure intact. Great changes there would undoubtedly be, principally in the status of private profit. For if an individual gains from a government decision, that is an unjust windfall, unlikely to be tolerated. Some private profit or bonus would remain necessary as an incentive to labour and management, but the variable dividend could hardly survive, since most of the uncertainties upon which it depends would be abolished by the existence of the central command office, and it would be politically intolerable that decisions of this office should raise or lower dividends. Thus owners of securities would all receive fixed interest, and the state would take the dividend, *i.e.* the profits tax would absorb all the windfall consequences of the computers' decisions. Note that this would not be a revolutionary change

[3] An "external economy" is a result of an economic decision not reflected in its direct monetary profitability; thus untaxed smoke emerging from a factory chimney, or the growth of a whole town determined simply by the decision to lay a railway track along a certain route.

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in the distribution of income. Securities bearing fixed interest are not involved, nor is that prime determinant of distribution, the law of inheritance. Computation implies no confiscation, any more than wealth was confiscated during the last war. But over the long pull there would be very serious changes. For really large new fortunes accrue nearly always to equity holders, whether it be through monopoly, a windfall, a tax loophole, or a genuinely creative insight. So computation would protect existing wealth from adverse windfalls, and siphon off most new accumulation in taxes.

THE ENTREPRENEUR, TOO, would entirely change his style. He would have ideas as before, but now he would have to persuade the computer office, not the banks or stock exchange, of their profitability; and as we have seen, his personal reward would be smaller and more certain. Both the *entrepreneur* selling his new scheme, and the member of parliament protecting his constituents, would be engaged in *electronic lobbying*; a process far more centralised and calling for far less personal and more technical arts of persuasion than the activities it would replace. But it could still very well be a public and a democratic process, in that parliament would decide the parameters and restraints to be imposed upon the computer, and parliamentary committees check the lists of projects accepted and rejected. Nor would the parliamentary machine be too hopelessly clogged by these new duties to work democratically. For parliaments already impose parameters and restraints when they vote taxes, tariffs and subsidies—this duty is not new at all. And the detailed decisions, at present taken by *entrepreneurs* on the market without parliamentary control, would instead be taken by computers without parliamentary control. Only the necessity to confirm major investment projects would be new.

IN A COUNTRY already socialist but retaining a market, the model sketched above is even easier to apply. As we have already seen, the difficulty in this model is not so much who owns the means of production as who receives the windfalls brought about by sharp changes in the "market"; for since these changes are publicly ordered it is intolerable that private people should greatly benefit. Just as the variable item in the previous case, the dividend, is stabilised by a profits tax so in this case a profits tax siphons off the windfall gains. From whom, however? In the only country of market socialism, Yugoslavia, the answer is of course the workers, who through profit-sharing are the natural beneficiaries from such windfalls. Thus if Yugoslavia were to substitute computation for competition the workers' bonus would wither away much as the capitalist dividend would have, in France, to wither away. Ideologically this would not be so serious a matter as under capitalism. For the Yugoslav worker's bonus is only supposed to be an incentive, while the capitalist's dividend is also a right. Even as things are, the Yugoslav government constantly steps in to claw back the monopoly or windfall elements that the market generates. However, its worship of "decentralisation" as such would be a powerful barrier to the use of computation.

In the U.S.S.R., on the other hand, we see yet another institutional structure adapting the new techniques to itself. It can do so more easily than Yugoslavia or France. The American economist Dantzig has the equations open at both ends, and allocates the factors of production according to the preferences of the sovereign consumer, preferences that vary with changes in taste, technique and factor cost; the Russian economist, Kantorovich, takes a centrally determined pattern of consumption as given, and so allocates the factors as to produce as much as possible on this pattern. If Marxist ideology suffers in this process, as we have seen, at least the political and economic institutions do not, and the planner remains sovereign instead of the consumer.

As the U.S.S.R. moves on towards "Full Communism" it becomes ever less likely that it will adopt a proper market or consumer's sovereignty. Both in Marx's vision (so much more detailed on the end-stage of socialism than about the immediate aftermath of the revolution) and in the promises of the new Party programme money is to wither away. The worker is to be told where to work, and when he gets there he will work for honour and from inner necessity, instead of freely following wage differentials as at present. The consumer is to be educated not to want too much. Moreover, as an additional precaution, he will freely help himself only to those things, such as municipal transport, for which his demand is inelastic; other things, in more elastic demand, such as housing, will be covertly or overtly rationed. Without money planning must evidently be still more centralised, yet the rationality problem is increasingly recognised and has indeed a little section to itself in the new programme. Clearly—though the programme does not say so—the "electronic market" is a *deus ex machina*, strengthening rationality at the very same time as abolishing ordinary money. One can of course object that the variables in the equations are precisely prices, since they fulfil exactly the same function. But any faithful Marxist, anxious to abolish money in accordance with prophecy and yet to economise resources, is entitled to this semantic loophole. Money, he will say, is the folding stuff; what makes computer relays click isn't money.

In fact since Stalin's death there has been more and more decentralisation, with profit or other monetary concepts replacing physical targets as economic indicators. Proposals verging on sheer Titoism have been made in Poland and U.S.S.R., and in the former country even implemented. How does this fit in with the preceding paragraphs? In my own opinion major ideological pronouncements, and such basic measures as the amalgamation of *kolkhozy* and their subjection to ever more outside interference, show which way the wind really is blowing. The reverse movement in the rights of managers and the choice of indicators is a temporary reaction to Stalin's too hasty centralisation. It is a prudent, tactical retreat towards semi-market methods in order to introduce a little rationality here and now. It is merely *reculer pour mieux sauter*; as in all other fields Communist strategic aims remain true to the classics of Marxism-

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Leninism, and tactical deviations must not blind us to this. Communist leaders may not always be clear on this rather technical subject, but at least in theory the position is official and definite: the roles of money and trade are being strengthened in order to hasten the growth of the economy towards "full Communism," and thus to abolish them—a dialectical policy exactly parallel to the strengthening of the state under Stalin in order that it might the sooner "wither away." The drive for greater rationality is basic and permanent; the use of decentralisation as a means to it is an expedient that will not last.

How may we sum this up? The impact of the new techniques will probably be strongest on the Communist countries that have already adopted the command economy. In them irrational methods of planning, springing from the Marxian theory of value, are already giving way to better methods based on modern Western theories. When we consider the theological status accorded the "theory of value" in Marxism, this is no small event. But the institutional model is unlikely to be shaken; indeed it will proceed on its historically pre-ordained development *only* by grace of an electronic market that combines the "abolition of money" with increased rationality. Secondly, any country already inclined to socialism—our hypothetical France—might just conceivably take the plunge into a command economy since it has become more pleasant and the transition to it is now compatible with democracy. But thirdly, a country, such as U.S.A., at present devoted to the free market on ideological grounds, might well take almost no notice of the whole development; except as it was applicable within private enterprises and particular departments of state.[4]

In as much as Soviet economic choices are becoming more rational under the impact of Kantorovich and others, there is indeed convergence. But mere economic rationality is a small affair. Rates of investment and speeds of growth continue to differ, and if the Party programme is to be believed (and why not?) the basic institutional model will diverge farther than ever.

Thesis (2) is a watered-down version of the Managerial Revolution. Like the month of March, this great theory "came in like a lion and went out like a lamb." We no longer speak of a self-conscious new class about to seize power in a definite way, but of a tendency to bureaucratism, reasonableness, expertise, disinterestedness that affects all systems alike. Just as the trained manager usurps the shareholder in the West, he usurps the workers' council in Yugoslavia and the Party boss in the U.S.S.R. In the West this facilitates nationalisation and state control, for the salaried manager is not devoted to capitalist ideology; in the U.S.S.R. it weakens the dynamism and intolerance of Communist ideology.

Here is a more plausible view than the first thesis, but how far does it go? "Reason is and ought to be," said David Hume, "the slave of the passions." It can show passion how to get its ends, what those ends cost and whether they are compatible; but it leaves many different ideologies, if chastened, substantially intact. Only if passion rests upon some factually false premise can reason strike it down. Thus it can deprive racism of foundation in biological science but not in human passions (it will be remembered that Eichmann also was a manager). Or if the Soviet government wants to abolish money, or the German government to distribute to everyone a share in the Volkswagen works, it can only show how this is best done. If American economic policy rests on the assumption that there are no poor in the U.S.A., reason can parade millions of them in refutation; but it can also suggest an alternative justification for similar policies: to let the wealth "trickle down" naturally from the rich.

Logically then, the Managerial Revolution, here defined as the onset of a reasonable professionalism, can be merely the efficient servant of any ideology not actually insane. Logically there are no grounds whatever for optimism in thesis (2). In practice, however, men are not logical. The empirical professional temper, the daily contact with fact are *psychologically* incompatible with extremism. Scarcely any ideological extremist is also a good manager. He might be a good musician or a good physicist but he could hardly be a good policeman, diplomat, or economic planner. Thus the really great Soviet planners have never been extremists: Pyatakov, Voznesenski, Pervukhin, Saburov all got into trouble with Stalin or Khrushchev over some hare-brained scheme. As to the police, the contrast between professionals and amateurs is really remarkable. Edgar Hoover of the F.B.I. was not a McCarthyite, Yagoda and Beria of the N.K.V.D. were not Stalinists. While Hitler marched to his *Götterdämmerung*, Himmler tried to negotiate peace. Real police oppression, real spy-mania, is the work of amateur extremists like Yezhov or the Congressional committees.

There is, then, real hope in the substitution of Hoovers for McCarthys, of Pervukhins and Saburovs for Khrushchevs; or in the personal conversion of ideologues into managers by experience.[5] And one is tempted to say that since this is the ordinary course of history, such a minimal convergence of the two systems may indeed be hoped for.

But is it the ordinary course of history? The mere possibility of "managerialisation" is so new in human affairs that it is dangerous to generalise about it. The professional civil servant or economic manager, with his specialist education,

[4] Paradoxically linear programming is nowhere more advanced than in U.S.A. at present. But inventions, and the money to develop them, often occur in very unlikely places. The uses of the new techniques in private enterprise amply justify the interest Americans show in them.

[5] A nice example of such an evolution is the case of that other great revolutionary policeman, Fouché. Beginning as an out-and-out Jacobin and murderer, he survived in his job long enough to become a mere professional.

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is at most 100 years old. He has not within that span of time succeeded in preventing innumerable public acts, large and small, as extreme, passionate, criminal, and downright foolish as any acts of the past. To take only recent events, and only such as are directly counter-productive, directly opposed to the interests of his masters; the expert did not prevent the Great Purge, Suez, Sakiet Sidi Youssef, or the Bay of Pigs. Nor did he prevent the innumerable follies and crackpot schemes of Soviet agriculture, the long line of which extends from 1928 uninterrupted and undiminished to the present day. So large and experienced a firm as U.S. Steel could still in 1962 be surprised at the sharpness of Presidential and public reaction to a mistimed rise in prices. Thus economics, too, is no stranger to deluded and self-destructive actions. Nay, more, the passionate rejection on principle of all calculation, the deliberate cultivation of unreason, is as widespread to-day as ever: looking aside from art and literature to what directly concerns us, we may instance the American Far Right and the Chinese Communists. The proliferation of experts has still not rendered inapposite the celebrated question of Baron Oxenstjerna: *nescis, mi fili, quantula sapientia mundus regatur?*

It would seem not even to be the case that particular movements, ideologies, and religions pursue a straight course from early enthusiasm to later circumspection. Chinese Communism was in all respects more rational in 1955–56 than it is to-day, and on the American right there was a lucid interval between McCarthy and the John Birch Society. We are perhaps in these matters overwhelmed by the particular case of Stalin, than whom it is not difficult to be more reasonable. We forget that the most peaceful—and indeed in a very direct sense the most managerial—of all Soviet leaders were Malenkov and Beria; Khrushchev is not an improvement on them, and Lenin was at least as sane, *mutatis mutandis*, as he.

INDEED THERE IS A STILL MORE pessimistic observation to make. All Communist leaders have become in recent years aware of the dangers of "managerialisation" as here defined, and have taken successful steps against it. Tito was the first, with a very direct attack upon the economic bureaucracy that Stalin had imposed on his country. The dynamism, if not the orthodoxy, of his own movement has been preserved by introducing a free market, thus making it impossible for great economic satraps to arise. If later the "world's slow stain" may have spread across the League of Yugoslav Communists, at least the change in economic set-up has delayed it; and the leadership's occasional purges and constant emphasis on modest living show that it sees the danger.

In the U.S.S.R., the corresponding event is the substitution of *Sovnarkhozy* for Ministries, with the concomitant victory of Khrushchev over Malenkov, Party over State. The top economic ministers *were* the Managerial Revolution, and Malenkov was their patron in the highest Party circles. In December, 1956, they ejected Khrushchev and the pure Party people from the management of the economy. In the counter-coup of early 1957 their glamorous posts were abolished, and many of them were shifted personally from the capital city to regional centres, where new state posts had been created, subordinate to the local Party bosses. This was accompanied by pronouncements on the leading role of the Party, expulsion of the "Anti-Party Group" from the central committee, and the insertion of purely Party people into the remaining top economic posts.[6] All these events constitute a a plain and explicit recognition of the dangers of "managerialisation," and a tremendous setback for it. To be sure, just as in the Yugoslav case, subsequently the same old trend has set in again. Indeed it is far more likely to do so, since the change meant no decentralisation or transition to a market economy, but merely a new chain of command in the hierarchy of central planning.

IN CHINA too there is prophylaxis against the loss of ideological dynamism. Chinese Communism is of course young, and has always been more lawless and informal, always relied more on pure Party cadres, less on specialists. Nevertheless it is significant how often the demand is stressed that leaders be "both Red and Expert." In no Communist country does the specialist receive more purely ideological training. And no one will deny that the Great Leap Forward and People's Communes of 1958 were a classic instance of misguided and untechnical enthusiasm.

Moreover, in both countries higher education has been made more anti-intellectual, its liberal arts content diminished, its course interrupted by periods of ordinary work. And this too is a conscious effort to oppose the newly discovered "managerial revolution." For such attitudes to higher education formed until the middle 'fifties no part of Communist tradition. One is tempted to say that such attacks on the free spirit must fail, as elsewhere they always have. But in a totalitarian society it suffices that such a blinkered education "takes" with enough able young people to keep the ruling party going, from generation to generation. That minimal condition satisfied, modern totalitarianism may well not go the way of its amateur predecessors. It is also clear that the mere demand for large numbers of superior *technicians* is not a liberalising factor. A totalitarian régime can much more easily satisfy an engineer than a poet: an engineer doesn't mind so much what he makes.

IN SUM, WE CANNOT BE CERTAIN that Communist managers will be more than pliant tools of their Party bosses, and we know that these bosses are well aware of the dangers. If there has been retreat, even in China, from the extremes of irrational futurism, there has been no rout. The ideologue is still very much the master and may well, within a narrower perimeter, remain so. And if he does so it will not

[6] I am very far here from asserting any historical inevitability. Beria, or Malenkov, or above all Zhukov, might well have won; and if they had they would probably have dealt the Party ideologues a subtle and mortal blow; and world history would have been different. But in fact the Party won each time, *and is now alert.*

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matter much how rationally American affairs are conducted, or what in this respect is the evolution of the American society and polity. For the proverb is most misleading that it takes two to make a quarrel. If one side is sufficiently blinded by ideology, the mere existence of another side suffices.

THE THIRD CONVERGENCE thesis is that mere affluence will do the job. We may phrase it this way: that the first two theses concern the conditions of production, the third the conditions of consumption.

Now within a country affluence does equalise and make similar. If A_1 has 20 times as much money as B_1, and B_1 is starving and A_1 has a three-roomed cottage, there is gross inequality. But now, keeping the monetary disparity at 20 times, let economic growth ensure to B_2 a job, a car, a four-roomed house, and three weeks' holiday in Florida. Then A_2 can have a yacht and an aeroplane, and a castle in Spain, yet inequality has diminished. Meet them on the street, they are dressed about the same. When they read a book, their chairs are equally comfortable and the light is as good. They eat nearly as well and live nearly as long as each other. The rest is trivia.

It is, perhaps above all, this kind of phenomenon that makes people believe in convergence. The Sheikh in his Cadillac, the Coca-Cola stand on the roof of Milan cathedral, the Cockney sprawled before his television with a can of cooled beer: all these are so many signs of "Americanisation," or, more precisely, of a state of affluence which the Americans were the first to experience. Then, with convergence so manifest in non-Communist countries, eyes turn to the Pole doing rock-and-roll, the Russian fans of Benny Goodman, the TV aerials in Prague, the soft-drink stands in Belgrade;[7] are these not harbingers of the same?

My guess is that Belgrade, the first to let in the Western mass culture, may indeed through inattention "converge"; that this small country, seeking to be a third force not only in diplomacy but also in ideology and way of life, may find itself culturally swamped. After all it is a balmy climate and a market economy; and if the ideology is strictly held and enforced it is nevertheless loosely defined, and remains of course a minority cult. If this guess were correct, then it would surely follow that "African socialism" and "Arab socialism" will not last long either; for these are the aims of still more open societies, with still looser ideologies. Moreover, it is of course Westward, not Eastward, that this third type of convergence points. No unforced individual, on getting richer, would behave as sketched below. On the contrary he would, alas, behave like an American. For instance, it strains the imagination that the present Puritanism, observable in all South-East Asian régimes, whatever their politics, should outlast South-East Asian poverty.

BUT SINO-SOVIET Communism is very different. *It aims eventually to socialise consumption*, and has indeed already gone very far in this direction. It produces few cars and little housing; of that little housing, mostly flats. It encourages restaurants and guided tours. It prefers laundries to washing-machines. It is far more lavish with public loudspeakers, etc., etc. And it is the constant burden of every Party statement that this trend will go much further, until little private cooking is done, and the family itself is subsumed into society as a whole—a grandiose vision indeed, but alas a perfectly practical one. The admission of jazz and abstract art is a very small offset to this. For abstraction is a minority movement by nature in all circumstances, most unlikely to spread further even in the West. No censorship is needed to keep it without influence in society. And as for jazz, it is easily admitted to the canon of the permissible. And it is not a naturally anti-social art; quite the contrary. Its American origins are its sole drawback, and they can be overcome. Thus the mere physical resemblance will be small between affluence in the U.S.S.R. and affluence in the U.S.A.: there is more difference between a rich Communist and our rich capitalist A_2 than there is between the latter and the well-paid worker B_2.

Indeed it is probable that A_2 would wreck Communism. Going where he will in his own vehicles, he will want to cross international boundaries. His wife will demand to be dressed by Balmain, and from that it is but a short step to reading *Le Monde*. Surrounding himself with goods of his own, and filling his abundant leisure in ways of his own choosing, he will become psychologically independent of State and Party. Thus not only ideology but also severe practical necessity demand that consumption be collectivised. And that is what is steadily happening.

Thus in the strict sense of convergence of economic and social systems it is quite definite that thesis (3) is wrong. The most cursory acquaintance with Marxist tradition, modern Communist ideology and practice, and the everyday life of Communist countries is proof enough. To think otherwise is to betray gross ignorance. But the important question is what people think, not what they consume or how they are forced to consume it. Taking the weak form of the thesis, will not mere prosperity induce tolerance?

IT IS CONTRARY to the spirit of *"Futuribles"* to throw up one's hands. The series is dedicated to the proposition that something definite can be said about everything. Yet this, our last, question is surely an exception. Indians are mostly tolerant, Swiss mostly not. Britons are mostly tolerant, Saudi Arabians mostly not. The witch-hunt has survived as the principal sport of a substantial minority in U.S.A. for 300 years, despite boom and slump and steady secular growth. For not only is it impossible to correlate absolute levels of welfare with tolerance and peacefulness, it is even impossible to say how the increase of welfare is correlated (the decrease does cause intolerance, but that is not here at issue).

If the Soviet economy continues to succeed, its leadership will presumably be more confident in the rightness of Communism; but then if it fails

[7] Yugo-Cocta, of course, not Coca-Cola; but still....

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they may retreat into snarling isolationism or even seek diversion in foreign adventure. Or again, success may quite literally fatten and soften them, like the Visigoth chiefs of old in the lush southern climate of Spain. So simple and classical a notion as debilitation through luxury is naïve, of course, but why is it wrong? Then, too, their prosperous subjects may become debilitated, and thus cease to be reliable cannon-fodder.[8] Or gratitude may bind them more strongly to their masters. Or prosperity may whet their appetites for what has always been denied them but can now be afforded: foreign travel, foreign papers, private cars, etc. For as we have just seen, it is much easier to collectivise the consumption of the poor than of the rich. The régime that promotes both prosperity and collectivism puts itself in an exceedingly dialectical situation. It may succeed, but it will not succeed with ease.

Most likely all of these things will happen at once. The outcome of so many counter-forces is not to be predicted. On what points, then, can we be definite?

"STRONG CONVERGENCE" is surely a false hope. If it came it would not make for peace, and anyhow it will not come. The U.S. government has not undertaken to abolish money or collectivise consumption; it will certainly not even nationalise property or use linear programming to set up a central plan. Communist planning is very likely to become more rational, but no less centralised than to-day (except in Yugoslavia). It will certainly use the new techniques, and this will probably undermine belief in the Marxian theory of value. But that is a pin-prick, since it is precisely these new techniques that will make it possible to abolish money, and the heretical rent and interest charges will be but shadow prices. In U.S.A. there will remain rich and poor, or at any rate "A_2" and "B_2". Marx, and the new Soviet Party programme, promise equality. Indeed the trend to equality is already strong to-day in U.S.S.R., while almost invisible in U.S.A.

As to "weak convergence" there has been already some. For one thing Stalin is dead. For another the mere volume of mutual comprehension has sharply risen. And experts of all kinds do do *some* good, they do prevent *some* excesses. But it would be very bold to assert that mere social and economic development, not itself convergent as we have seen, will act to bring about goodwill or tolerance between the parties.

There is however a quite separate reason for "weak convergence," not based on pseudo-Marxian economic determinism nor yet on an 18th-century faith in reason: the Bomb. It is not my task to expatiate here upon this, but consider what the Bomb has already achieved. It has caused Khrushchev to deny the cherished dogma of the inevitability of war between the major powers. Further it has forced him, through his belief (not shared in the West) that all minor wars must escalate into major wars, to condemn the forceful "liberation" of colonial peoples. It has split him from Mao Tse-tung, not only on the above two issues, but also on the even simpler issue of whether Mao is to be given a Bomb of his own. It has had somewhat similar effects on the U.S. government and its allies.

BUT THIS IS ONLY a beginning. It has long been clear that "ultimate" weapons are becoming easier and easier to produce. Miniaturisation, and the substitution of mathematical simulation for laboratory experiment, make seismic stations out of date. An Israeli Bomb, a Cuban Bomb, an Albanian Bomb, the O.A.S. . . . the I.R.A. . . . the Mafia . . . imagination boggles. And when one day the Germ puts the Bomb on the scrap-heap, any lunatic in a shed will be able to destroy the species: an *n*-power problem indeed. Thus the desirability of close international inspection grows all the time. At the same time the "Intelligence Gap" diminishes. For what kinds of espionage can Communism prevent? What can it conceal that a more democratic system cannot? It can prevent indignation meetings in villages chosen as missile sites. It can censor the press. It can keep scientists hidden and silent. It can camouflage vast economic projects. But the trends noted above will render most of these things unnecessary, until ultimately the Germ takes over: requiring no missiles, few scientists, little expenditure. To beat that, international inspection must have such powers as to be world government, and its imposition will deprive Communism of no special intelligence advantage.

World government, superimposed on a Cold War still raging, is the ultimate in "weak convergence". It is also rather hard to imagine, and to prophesy it is a clear violation of Oxenstjerna's Rule. But that lies outside my duties. Enough to suggest that the systems will converge if at all through the sheer necessities of defence, and not through any internal evolution.[9]

Peter Wiles

[8] There seems to be something like this among U.S. schoolchildren, about one half of whom have recently been found to suffer from "hypokinesia" —muscular dystrophy due to lack of exercise. However it is exceedingly improbable that a Communist government would permit this to happen in so simple and direct a way.

[9] I had intended to append a little *samokritika* on my failure to assign any role to morality. Must there not be a moral, as opposed to an intellectual, revulsion against present policies? At the beginning, Nuclear Disarmament looked like another Abolitionist movement—that historical movement against the evil of slavery which I persist in my philistine way in regarding as a successful historical movement based on morality alone. There is a tributary, too, of pure moral revulsion in the stream of de-Stalinisation—that too is a kind of Abolitionism.

But moral movements can least of all be predicted, nor are the issues before us so clear as slavery. The *consensus gentium* then was that slavery is bad, as it is now that the colour bar and concentration camps are bad. Slavery and Stalinism were moral pushovers. But there is no *consensus gentium* on these other issues. My guess is, then, that there will be no strong moral movement. Original Sin is no less real than Original Folly.

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LETTERS

Attlee and the Bomb

I AGREE with Mr. R. H. S. Crossman [ENCOUNTER, March and April] that the authority of the Cabinet is declining and being replaced by that of the Prime Minister. But he supports his argument with one piece of evidence which is wholly incorrect and which for reasons of historical accuracy must be refuted. In his article in your April number he wrote:

> "One such occasion was when Sir Winston, shortly after he took office in 1951, announced that the first British A-bomb had been successfully tested. The Premier was careful to pay his tribute to his predecessor, for making the initial decision and sanctioning the huge expenditures that had never been revealed to Parliament. Very soon it was common knowledge that this decision had been taken by Mr. Attlee without any prior discussion in the Cabinet, and that he had never revealed it to any but a handful of trusted friends."

It surprises me that my colleague, Dick Crossman, should have thought it possible that Mr. Attlee could have arrived at a decision of such momentous importance, involving huge sums of money, without informing his colleagues and getting their support. I was Minister of Supply at the time and can testify that the development of atomic bombs, which it was my responsibility to carry out, was endorsed by the Cabinet. Moreover, so far from Mr. Attlee not revealing this decision "to any but a handful of trusted friends," it was announced in Parliament by the Minister of Defence, now Earl Alexander, in reply to a Question on May 12th, 1948.

G. R. STRAUSS, M.P.

House of Commons

BEFORE sending it to ENCOUNTER, Mr. Strauss very courteously showed me the text of the above letter, and thus gave me time to discuss his version of what happened with half-a-dozen other members of the Attlee administration and collect the material for an adequate reply.

Let us consider first the precise issue about which we are arguing. It is not the decision to launch a large programme designed to put this country into the forefront of peaceful atomic development. One of the proudest boasts of the Attlee Government was the establishment of the Atomic Energy Authority, and the construction of nuclear reactors. It was not difficult even for an amateur to conclude that in due course these nuclear reactors *could* be employed for warlike or peaceful uses, and that the Government was bound to set in motion some research and development of nuclear weapons. What we are discussing is whether Mr. Attlee concealed the decision to undertake not merely research and development but also immediate large-scale production of nuclear weapons.

For convenience I divide the question into two parts: (1) Was Parliament informed? (2) Was there a Cabinet decision? On both these points, Mr. Strauss emphatically disagrees with me, stating that the decision was announced to Parliament on May 12th, 1948, after being endorsed by the Cabinet.

I quote verbatim the extremely brief question and answer to which Mr. Strauss refers: Mr. George Jeger asked the Minister of Defence whether he was satisfied that adequate progress is being made in the development of the most modern types of weapon.

> THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (Mr. A. V. Alexander): "Yes, Sir. As was made clear in the Statement relating to Defence, 1948 (Command 7327), research and development continue to receive the highest priority in the defence field, and all types of modern weapons, including atomic weapons, are being developed."
>
> MR. JEGER: "Can the Minister give any further information on the development of atomic weapons?"
>
> MR. ALEXANDER: "No. I do not think it would be in the public interest to do that."

If the Minister of Defence on this occasion had really been announcing the momentous decision to make Britain a nuclear power by going into production of atomic bombs, it is difficult to conceive that the issue would have been dismissed quite so peremptorily! What the Minister of Defence was surely doing on May 12th, 1948, was fobbing off a not very curious Labour Member with a statement carefully limited to "Research and Development" as distinct from "Production." On this issue, therefore, I feel that the new evidence Mr. Strauss provides is not sufficient to disprove Sir Winston's assertion in February 1952 that Mr. Attlee and his colleagues had "preferred to conceal this vast operation and its finances from the scrutiny of the House; not even obtaining a vote on the principle involved."

Now for the second question—was there or was there not a Cabinet decision which was then kept secret from the House of Commons? Not one of the Attlee Government to whom I have so far submitted the question agrees with Mr. Strauss. I think their view is fairly summed up in the following words from a letter Mr. Shinwell wrote me and which he has permitted me to quote:

> "Not only do I fail to recall any mention of the Government's decision, either as member of the Cabinet, Secretary for War and Minister of Defence, but when I was engaged writing a series of articles for the *Sunday Times* and *Sunday Telegraph* I consulted Sir Norman Brook, in order to avoid any violation of the Official Secrets Act. I asked him to look up the Cabinet records for any reference to the subject of the A-Bomb, which he did, and then informed me that there is no such reference.
>
> "It may be that Attlee consulted a few mem-

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bers, like Bevin and Alexander, and Strauss, who although not in the Cabinet, was Minister of Supply, but it is strange that neither as War Secretary nor as Minister of Defence I heard anything of the Government's intentions."

This seems to be pretty conclusive—unless Mr. Strauss has some more evidence to support his contention.

R. H. S. Crossman

House of Commons

In Respect of Georg Lukács

[Mr. Lichtheim's article has provoked considerable controversy. Further comment will be appearing in subsequent issues.]

Mr. George Lichtheim declares [Encounter, May] that Georg Lukács "has failed altogether as a responsible writer, and ultimately as a man." There is no need to comment on the arrogant insensitivity of such a judgment, passed from complete safety on an aged man who has lived, and continues to live, in persistent danger. What needs to be shown is that this judgment is impertinent to the facts.

Lukács is one of the great literary critics of the 20th century. Heir to Lessing and Sainte-Beuve, no less than to Hegel and Marx, he has produced a body of theoretic and practical criticism which can be compared, for tenacity of influence, with that of T. S. Eliot, and for breadth of compass with that of Edmund Wilson. The range of those to whom he has been master or incitement is large: it extends from Thomas Mann to Ernst Bloch, from Holthusen and Adorno to Sartre. To numerous intellectuals in eastern Europe, as well as in the west, Lukács's personal survival, his achievement of work of the first magnitude under conditions of appalling private and public torment, has been a touchstone of hope.

As only one of Lukács's books, and two small collections of essays, have so far been translated into English, a reader who lacks German can have no just estimate of the facts. This allows Mr. Lichtheim to ignore the bulk of Lukács's actual performance. The latest bibliography lists twenty-five books and some forty essays. Among the earliest, there are classics of philosophic criticism, arguments which have profoundly modified our entire conception of the problems of genre and literary form. They include *A dráma formája* (Budapest, 1909), *Die Seele und die Formen* (Berlin, 1911), and *Die Theorie des Romans* (Berlin, 1920).

Mr. Lichtheim points out Lukács's "insensitivity to the German language." The relevant fact is that Lukács fled from Nazism and spent long years of exile in Moscow. There he was cut-off from all but artificial or *côterie* contact with the language. His stiff, grey style, moreover, has both a moral and a tactical effect: it implies that the time is too grim for the pleasures of *belles-lettres*, and like Dr. Leavis's prose, it seeks to show, by example, the technical responsibility, the toughmindedeness required for criticism. (I have touched on this question in more detail in my essay *"Georg Lukács and his Devil's Pact," Kenyon Review*, Winter 1960).

It was in exile that Lukács wrote several of the books that make of him the only major German literary critic of our epoch. No one seeking to understand either the achievements or the peculiar disasters of German literature after Goethe can ignore *Goethe und seine Zeit*, *Gottfried Keller*, the monograph on Thomas Mann, and *Deutsche Realisten des 19 Jahrhunderts* (with its superb essays on Kleist and Fontane).

Equally distinguished is Lukács's study of the French novel from Balzac to Zola. (The relevant texts are to be found in *Balzac und der französische Realismus* and in *Probleme des Realismus*.) No brief allusion can give an adequate notion of the radicalism and intricacy of Lukács's conjecture. The argument, ultimately rooted in Lessing's and Hegel's observations on Homer, turns on the discrimination between *erzählen* (narration) and *beschreiben* (description, from "outside"). The realist, such as Cervantes, Balzac, and Tolstoy, makes of physical objects and the world's furnishings an integral, dramatic element in the human action; hand and sword or hand and plough are in live interaction. The naturalist (Zola, the modern novelists of reportage), severed by the increasing chaos of industrial specialisation from an organic intimacy with his surroundings, seeks to create an illusion of reality by technical description, by accumulation of detail. The distinction is that between the dramatic "realisation" of a house-door in *Eugénie Grandet* and the inventory of cheeses in Zola's *Ventre de Paris*. By means of Lukács's theory, we may argue that there is a decline in the French novel after Balzac and Stendhal; we may seek to show the pre-eminence of *Anna Karenina*, with its deep-breathing, organic form, over the brilliant, but strangled tactics of *Madame Bovary*. The flaw in Lukács's view of the French novel is the omission of Proust. Here Mr. Lichtheim's point about Victorian notions of propriety is valid (he will find it put, in precisely the same way, in the *Kenyon Review* essay mentioned above).

The picture of a servile Lukács, seeking to please Stalinism, is palpably false. Despite intense pressures, despite his precarious, hardly tenable personal situation in exile in the Soviet Union, despite his unwavering conviction that the defeat of Nazism was the supreme task of all decent men, Lukács refused to write the large-scale, eulogistic studies of Soviet writers demanded of him. Instead, he continued to write about Cervantes, Shakespeare, Goethe, Balzac, Tolstoy. This refusal to compromise with his æsthetic standards has made Lukács vulnerable to constant Stalinist and Zhdanovite attack. The charge hurled against him by Joseph Revai, in 1956, is typical:

> What could Hungarian literature gain from the password given it by Lukács in 1954: "Zola? No, Balzac!"? And what could it gain from the slogan put forward by Lukács in 1948: "Neither Pirandello nor Priestley, but Shakespeare and Molière"? In both instances—nothing.

There *are* timidities, indirections, and even moments of abjection in Lukács's career (one thinks of the bow to Stalin's theory of linguistics in the paper on *Literatur und Kunst als Ueberbau*, de-

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livered as a lecture in Budapest in June, 1951). But no outsider, delivering moral sentence from the safety of the west, can have an adequate realisation of the solitudes and torments endured by those who live in a police state, yet seek, somehow, to guard their lives and carry on their work.

Mr. Lichtheim attacks *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft*. He is right; it is a bitter, often silly book (probably Lukács's worst). But the question it poses is valid and of deep urgency: what went wrong in the history of German thought to permit the rise of barbarism? In many respects, the question dominates Lukács's intellectual life—as it must that of any thinking man of his background. His belief that the answer may be found in the tradition of irrationalism from Schelling to Max Stirner is, at least, worth serious investigation. And if he attacks Bertrand Russell, the reason is (and Lichtheim surely knows it) that Russell had, temporarily, raised the possibility of a preventive war against Russia.

Lichtheim asserts that Lukács "has failed to write the Marxist æsthetics." How does he know? The prolegomena to that æsthetics are set out in a number of important works he does not even mention (*Der Junge Hegel, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Aesthetik*). The *Aesthetik* itself, moreover, is thought to be either in progress or completed (there is some evidence that the latter is the case). Perhaps Mr. Lichtheim is right, and it will not be a satisfactory book. But that will not be because of Lukács's cowardice or personal failures. Is there a liberal or post-Kantian æsthetic of any kind that can, at present, be regarded as coherent? Is there, one would nearly ask, any since Plato?

So long as Lukács's works are not available in English, many interested readers will find it difficult to judge for themselves. But a number of good introductions to the problems and achievements of Lukács's criticism are now available. These may be worth listing: Peter Demetz: *Marx, Engels und die Dichter* (Stuttgart, 1959); Lucien Goldmann: *Introduction aux premiers écrits de Georges Lukács* (*Temps Modernes*, August, 1962); H. Althaus: *Georg Lukács* (Bern, 1962); and, above all, the thoroughly documented and annotated anthology of Lukács's writings published by Peter Dudz under the title *Schriften zur Literatursoziologie* (Neuwied, 1961).

GEORGE STEINER

Churchill College, Cambridge

British Attitudes

1. Does Mr. H. V. Hodson [ENCOUNTER, April 1963] argue that there is some connection between power and "responsibility" and the ability to take a dispassionate view of international affairs?
2. Does he consider that the "distasteful" policies pursued by Washington (for which Mr. Kennedy has claimed responsibility) were, or are, compatible with a "genuine faith in the United Nations"?
3. Does he think that Russian rockets in Cuba, after the Bay of Pigs venture, were less justified as a deterrent, or militarily more dangerous to a potential opponent, than American rockets in Formosa or in Holy Loch?
4. Would he maintain that the government of Cuba is intrinsically more objectionable than the present governments of Nicaragua or Paraguay?
5. As a student of the American press, Mr. Hodson must be aware that powerful forces are trying to push the American Government into more forceful action against Cuba, even after removal of the Soviet missiles. Does he think they ought to be encouraged? If not, does he consider that the cause of moderation is likely to be served by British silence?

The alarming gap between British official policy and British public opinion, which Mr. Hodson rightly deplores, is attributable to the fact that neither the Government, nor the press, nor the two main political parties, are willing to recognise how widespread is the desire for a more neutral position in the Cold War. It does not make sense to have a foreign policy which, when put to the test, is found to be so unpopular.

JOHN AKERS

Geneva

VERY BRIEFLY, my answers to Mr. Akers are:

1. Between power and responsibility, yes: either without the other is bad or futile. A dispassionate view of international affairs is impossible, or, if possible, feeble.
2. Yes.
3. To the first half of the question, yes. The second half involves a complete analysis of the strategy of nuclear power.
4. Comparisons are odious, and do not arise from my previous observations, nor are they relevant.
5. To the first question, yes. I do not follow the second: President Kennedy supports moderation and should himself be supported by British opinion.

As to Mr. Aker's closing comment, "neutral" I understand, but not "more neutral" or partly neutral. If he implies that we should not care who "wins" the Cold War, this seems to me nonsense, and I believe that the overwhelming majority of British opinion agrees with me.

H. V. HODSON

Ditchley Park, Oxfordshire

India

IN HIS ARTICLE, John Mander has a good many sensible remarks to make about the declining standard of English in India.

It is very true that most of our students have small English. Their grammar is shaky, sentences loose, tortuous and cumbersome. What has brought about the decline in the standard is of course defective teaching. The students are seldom encouraged to read the modern British writers. The syllabi mainly comprise the Romantic writers of the 19th century. As a result the so-called good students take to writing a kind of prose which has

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Moscow

MR. *Khrushchev has expelled the "Newsweek" correspondent in Moscow. Whitman Bassow made the mistake of reporting the following joke, now making the rounds in the Soviet Union:*

"Question—Is there life on Mars?

"Answer—No. There is no life there, either."

Mr. Khrushchev did not think it was funny, especially at a time when he was holding the world spellbound with Soviet somersaults in outer space. N.Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

New York

IN HIS TALK *here on the occasion of the National Book Awards, Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer said: "Three weeks ago a high officer of the National Book Committee asked for a title for this talk. The officer protested that my title, 'The Added Cubit,' was puzzling and uninformative. I said that it had a history, and when the officer asked I quoted St. Matthew. Then the officer said, 'From what book is that?' The National Book Committee still has a lot to do."* N.Y. TIMES

Washington

WHAT FOLLOWS *is a correction [by Arthur Krock, Washington columnist, who had defended Longfellow against the capital's new infatuation with "obscure verse"] made here in describing "Evangeline" as having been completely in "iambic" hexameters. The form, as several annoyed poets have pointed out, was "English" hexameters, or five lines per verse of "dactyllic" hexameters, and a sixth which is "spondee."*

N.Y. TIMES

London

IT WAS *surprising—even disappointing—to receive a circular from so firmly American-based a magazine as* Reader's Digest *on the theme "Ten Little Nigger Boys." Surely they would not use the same text at home, either south or north of the Mason-Dixon Line? Even Agatha Christie's play, which so notably flopped here a few months ago, could not use that title in the United States and had to be called "Ten Little Indians." An indignant correspondent who has had the same circular asks what the effect would be if somebody used similar advertising copy on the theme "Ten Little Yids." A good question. It is time people thought a good deal more carefully before using the word "Nigger."*

THE GUARDIAN

London

I WOULD *make [said Lord Rea in the House of Lords] some criticism of some of the terminology in this Bill. Clause 40 exempts depôts where coal is stored "in the open." I had thought that the word "open" was either an adjective or a verb. In the open what? Does the Bill only apply to places "in the shut"? What is a "shut"? Would not the noble Lord tell us what a "shut" is?*

Is this Bill not a suitable place in which to get rid of the haunting ghost of Mrs. Grundy, who long ago should have been laid to rest in her Victorian grave? Is this not a wonderful opportunity for calling a privy a privy, or, if necessary, a water closet, and for abandoning ridiculous and unnecessary euphemisms? A "sanitary convenience," as referred to in this Bill, presumably does not mean either a handkerchief or the driver of a dustcart. So why should not this Bill be more specific and less ambiguous?

Lest worst should befall, may I protest now against the word "lavatory," except as a place in which to wash, which is what the word means; against the word "toilet," which means beautifying the hair or the raiment, and anyhow is not an English noun; and, above all, against the word "powder room," which seems to indicate in Transatlantic ladies a touching and remarkable belief in the relieving powers of pulverised talcum. HANSARD

London

CONCENTRATION-CAMP *literature is, of course, a by-product of totalitarian régimes, whether of the left or right; but—as the case of Miss Barbara Fell shows [English civil servant sentenced to three years for showing official documents to a Yugoslav diplomat]—even countries governed by deep-rooted parliamentary democracies can be incredibly ruthless where crimes against the state are concerned.... When one has read "One Day In The Life Of Ivan Denisovich" by Alexander Solzhenitsyn, it is important to remember that there are still many hundreds of people wrongly imprisoned, not only in Russia but also in countries on both sides of the iron and bamboo curtains; and Miss Barbara Fell is one of them.* THE QUEEN

New Delhi

THE BOMBAY *Customs were again assailed recently by literary problems. This time it was the February issue of* ENCOUNTER, *a more sober and responsible journal than which it is difficult to conceive. The particular issue which the Customs were reluctant to release without clearance from New Delhi contained an article on India by Mr. John Mander who, apart from describing Indian democracy as "a good deal more robust than the other fair-weather democracies of the Afro-Asian world," discusses the rather unoriginal topics of after Nehru what, of the opposition parties, of the Indian press, of the language problem, and so on. Nothing very startling but pleasant reading.*

Cannot there be a machinery by which these things can be decided immediately on the spot without having to activate various ponderous machines in New Delhi? And need we be so susceptible as we appear to be? Was this issue of ENCOUNTER *referred to the Prime Minister whose sophisticated understanding of these things is such that one could not believe he would find anything objectionable in Mr. Mander's effort? Emergency, yes; the need for security, yes; but surely the line must be drawn somewhere.* THE TIMES OF INDIA

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indeed "a slightly old-fashioned flavour." The "backbenchers" on the other hand find the Romantic writers immensely tough, cannot cotton on to them and of course take to sheer mechanical cramming. The students desirous of developing a modern style seldom get a good instructor. They fall for slangy expressions and American words of dubious origin. Naturally theirs is hardly a civilised prose, discreet, natural and pointed. It is, on the contrary, jolty, slangy and stilted.

As Mr. Mander observes, in India "English has become essentially a dead language." And unless our students are encouraged to take a genuine interest in the contemporary British writers there cannot be any perceptible improvement in the standard of spoken and written English in our country.

RANJAN BANERJEE

Calcutta

IT IS A prevalent habit with special correspondents and journalists nowadays to make sweeping generalisation. I wish John Mander [ENCOUNTER, February 1963] were an exception. Where to begin? Take, for instance, these statements: "One fears that India's tragedy might be precisely that her Prime Minister has to be a genius;" or "After Nehru, the deluge." No country which cherishes democratic traditions would need to have only a genius to lead her destinies, much less India. So too, his appreciation of the status of English in India is vague and far from the truth. English is no doubt a foreign language; but it has ably served the role of an official language in carrying on day-to-day administration. All legislation has been in English; judgments have been pronounced in English; and not a few Indians have earned recognition as writers in English. I for one, foresee a healthy growth of interest in English. The development of regional language will in no way impede that of English. In fact there is a tendency towards constructive enmity. Lacking a national language, India is not at a disadvantage compared with other countries. On the contrary, the fourteen national languages tend to strengthen the federal policy. (The editors of ENCOUNTER can confirm this point by the rise in circulation figures in India over the last decade.)

True, events are likely to force India into greater dependence on the West. But one cannot perceive how this dependence will extend to cultural matters also. Mander admits that even her political borrowings from British experience have only been partial. India has tried to develop a distinctive character of her own. Evidently Mander looks at India through a Western window, which is also the prison-wall that obstructs his vision. India might appear to be a sub-continent with diverse cultures and various languages tending to disintegrate the polity. Yet the resolute observer will be able to find the pattern of a nation that cherishes democratic values. There is no need to be alarmist. A nation is a growing thing.

After Nehru? Nothing will happen; certainly not the deluge. To-day he guides a nation's destinies as perhaps only Adenauer has done in this century ("The End of the Adenauer Era," ENCOUNTER, February 1963). To-morrow he may be relegated, like Adenauer, to a footnote in history. The nation goes on.

S. KALYANARAMAN

Simla, India

Paul Valéry

IN HIS review of Paul Valéry's *History and Politics* [ENCOUNTER, March], Mr. J. G. Weightman deserves credit for his honesty in confessing right at the start that his hero-worship of Valéry "has been little short of idolatry," and that he views "with the worst will in the world" the Master's work being turned into English. This puts his whole article in the right perspective—that of a disciple's rather waspish jealousy. It also explains the candid absurdity of his remark that "the twenty-nine thousand pages of the notebooks have proved something of a disappointment."

But it does not excuse his deliberate misstatement that "Almost half of this 600-page book consists of very slight pieces . . . occasional talks and bread-and-butter writings." The fact is that all but 75 pages of the volume are to be found in the standard French editions of Valéry's work, which are by no means complete. Mr. Weightman clearly preferred to ignore that he was reviewing, not a devotee's selection, but one of the 15 volumes of the *Collected Works*.

One point, however, puzzles me. He suggests that the volume should have included "some of the many jottings from the *Cahiers* relating to history and politics." Has he forgotten our exchange of letters and messages on this subject last year, in which I explained that we had no permissions for the *Cahiers*? Or *has* he forgotten?

JACKSON MATHEWS

New York City

I MUST APOLOGISE to Professor Mathews for having forgotten, or for not having grasped, that he did not have permission to reproduce material from the *Cahiers*. This being so, it was pointless of me to suggest that the volume should have included extracts from the *Cahiers*.

Apart from that, I don't really see why he is so cross with me. I expressed legitimate opinions about Valéry that I am quite prepared to defend at any length. The *Cahiers* are, for me, "something of a disappointment." I stick to the view that "almost half of this 600-page book consists of very slight pieces." The fact that they are included in the official French editions does not make them any more substantial. Above all, there is no "waspish jealousy" in my review. Who am I to be jealous of Valéry?

On one point, Professor Mathews flatly misquotes me. It is nonsense to suggest that I am opposed to Valéry being translated into English. On the contrary, I have the greatest respect for the Bollingen undertaking.

J. G. WEIGHTMAN

London

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AUTHORS

Herbert Luethy, author of the well-known *The State of France* (1955), has just returned from a journey to Africa and Asia to gather material for a history of colonialism. His most recent contribution to ENCOUNTER was *Has Switzerland a Future?* (December, 1962). His present article has been translated from the French through the courtesy of the Institute of Social Studies in Lausanne....

Alastair Buchan is Director of the Institute for Strategic Studies in London. His most recent book is a study of *Nato in the Sixties* (Chatto & Windus)....

Nadine Gordimer, who lives in Johannesburg, has published several novels and volumes of short stories on South African life. In 1961 she won the W. H. Smith Literary Prize with *Friday's Footprint*, and *Occasion for Loving* (Gollancz), her most recent novel, appeared earlier this year. A previous contribution to ENCOUNTER, "A Thing of the Past," was published in the September 1959 issue....

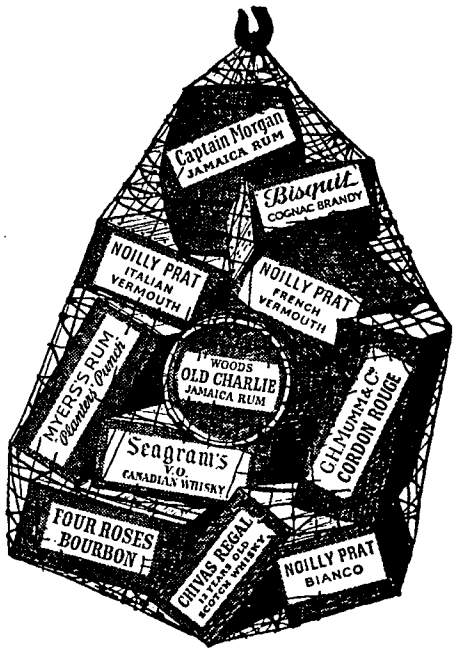
Ray Gosling is a young (born 1939) English writer who lives in Nottingham. He wrote a Young Fabian pamphlet, "Lady Albemarle's Boys," about Youth Clubs, and has just published his first book, an autobiography, *Sum Total* (Faber). He is now at work on a travelogue, "English Journey"....

Alfred Sherman recently returned from Cuba; his articles appeared in *The Spectator*. He was *The Observer*'s correspondent in Yugoslavia, and has also written on problems of Chinese Communism. He lives in London....

Dr. Bernard Crick has taught at Harvard and the University of California, and is now a Lecturer at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He is the author of *The Fabian Reform of the Commons* (Fabian Society) and *In Dissent of Politics*, published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

CORRECTION

Due to an error a paraphrase of a statement of Stalin's was wrongly attributed to Lenin on p. 30 of Patricia Blake's Introduction to "New Voices in Russian Writing" in our April issue. Miss Blake's paraphrase was, of course, of Stalin's well-known remark to H. G. Wells: "Education is a weapon whose effect depends on who holds it in his hands and at whom it is aimed."



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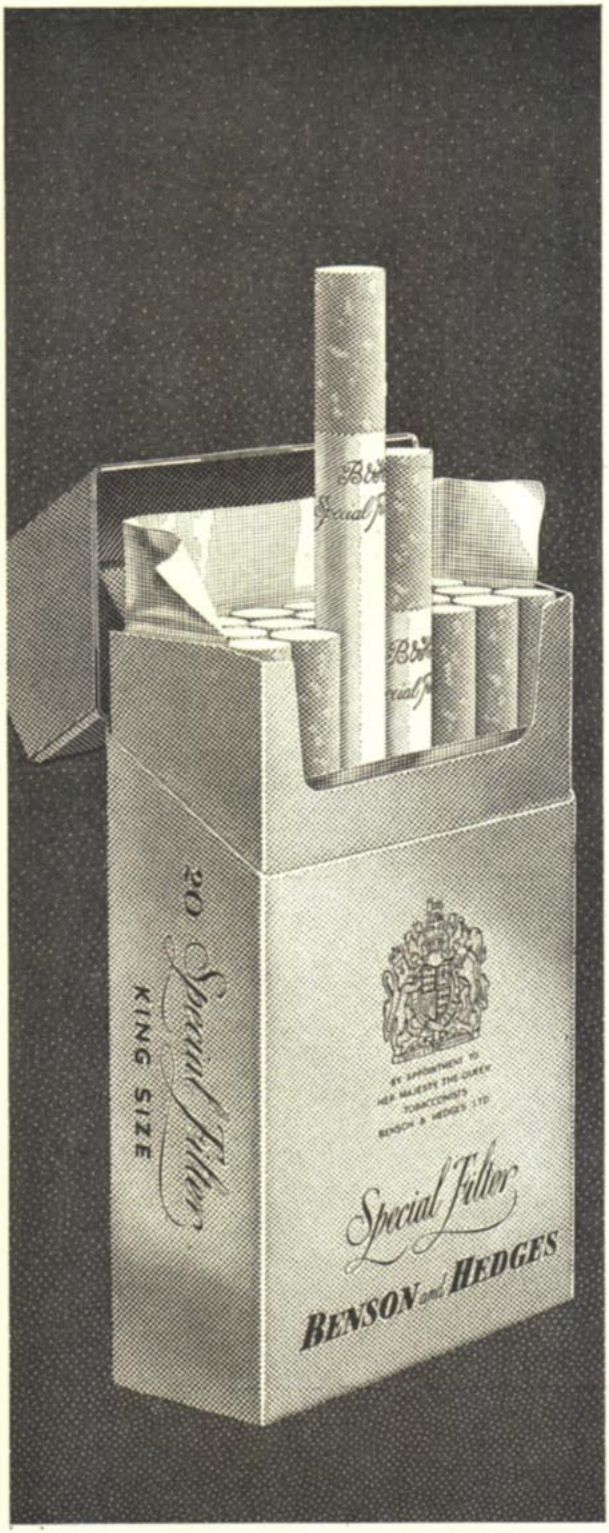

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